

# Floral Book



By A. G. Foster

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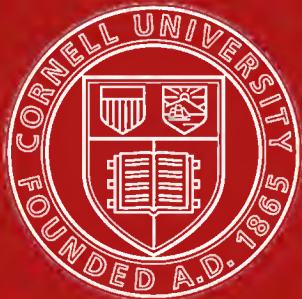
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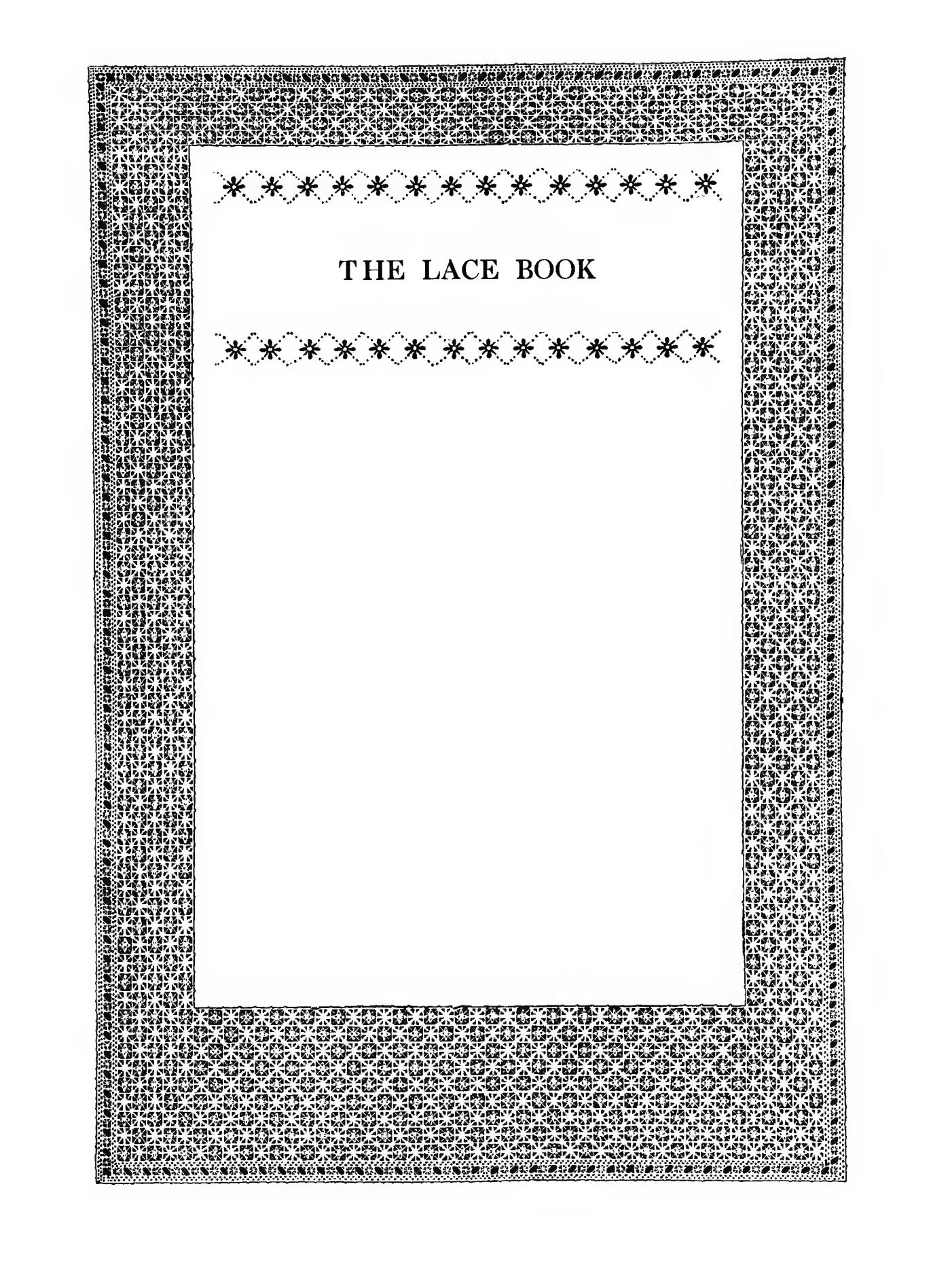
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THE LACE BOOK







QUEEN MARIE AMÉLIE (1782-1866)  
WIFE OF LOUIS PHILIPPE

*Portrait by Winterhalter*

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*Brussels lace flounces. Scarf of  
machine-made net embroidered by hand*



# THE LACE BOOK

BY

N. HUDSON MOORE

AUTHOR OF

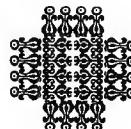
*“The Old China Book,” “The Old Furniture Book,” etc.*

WITH SEVENTY ENGRAVINGS

SHOWING SPECIMENS OF LACE, OR ITS WEAR IN FAMOUS PORTRAITS

AND

WITH BORDER BY CHARLES E. CARTWRIGHT AND  
DECORATIONS AFTER BODONI



NEW YORK  
FREDERICK A. STOKES COMPANY  
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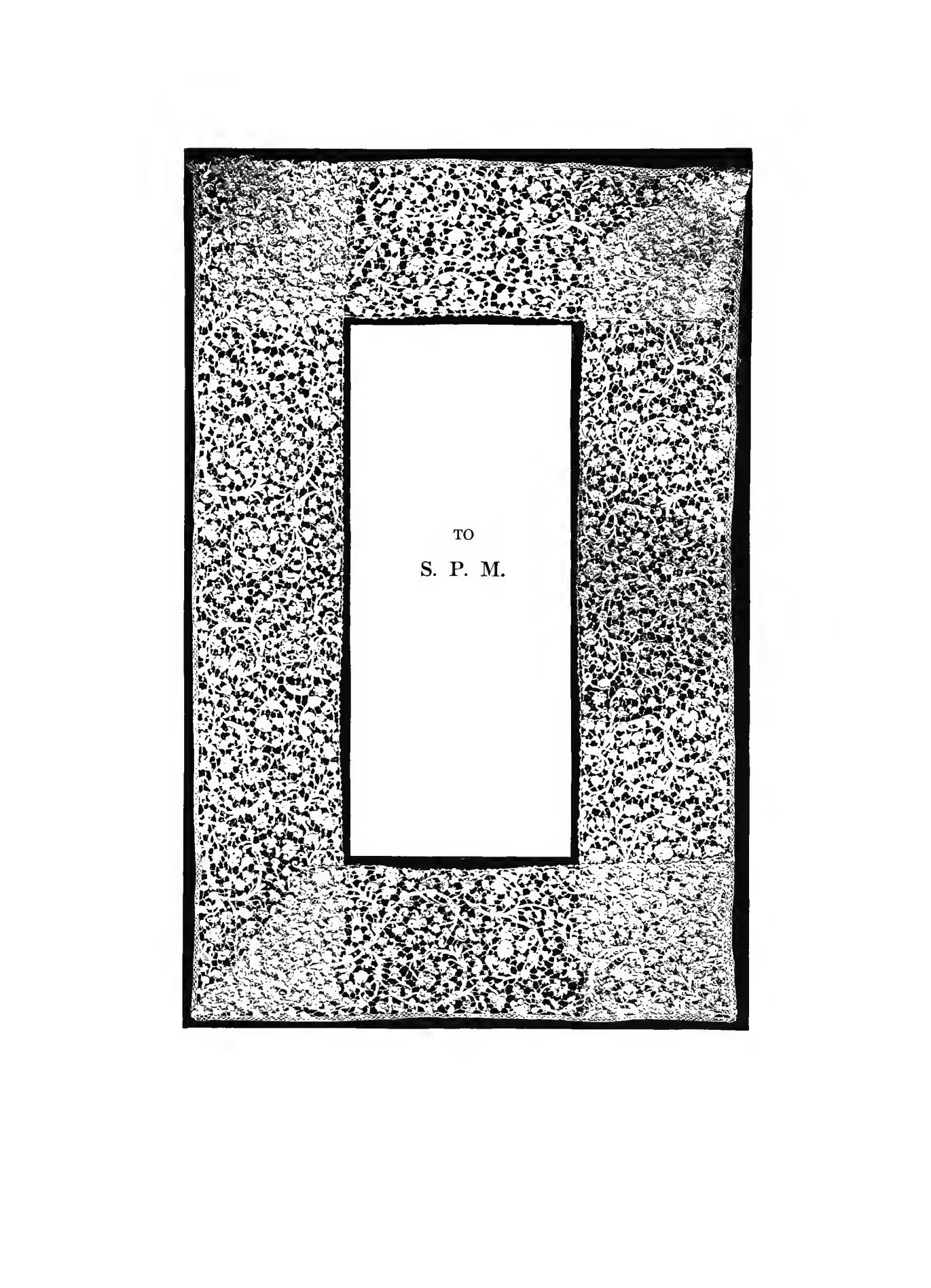
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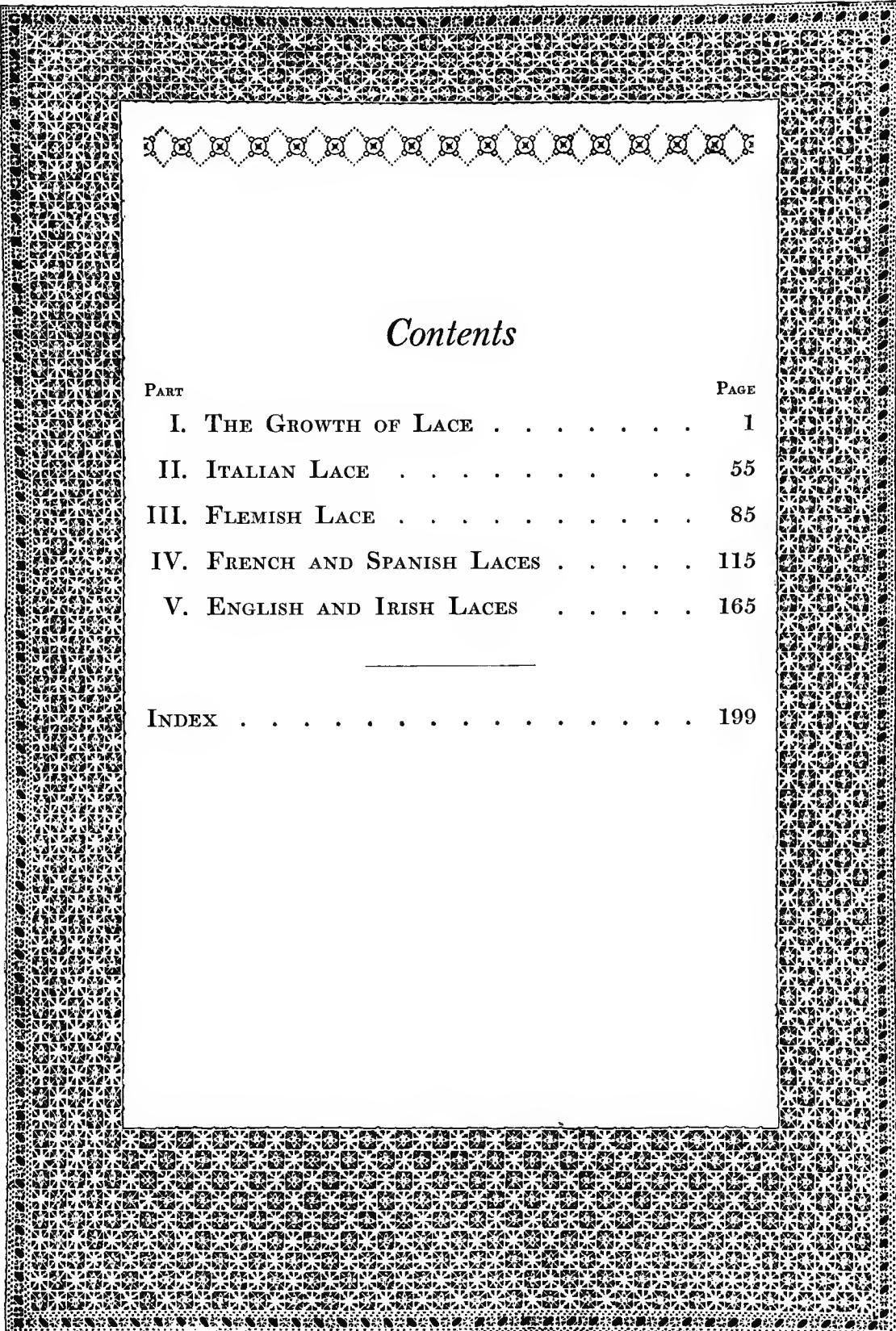
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TO  
S. P. M.





## *Contents*

PART	PAGE
I. THE GROWTH OF LACE . . . . .	1
II. ITALIAN LACE . . . . .	55
III. FLEMISH LACE . . . . .	85
IV. FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES . . . . .	115
V. ENGLISH AND IRISH LACES . . . . .	165
<hr/>	
INDEX . . . . .	199





## *List of Illustrations*

### PART I

*Frontispiece.* Queen Marie-Amélie.

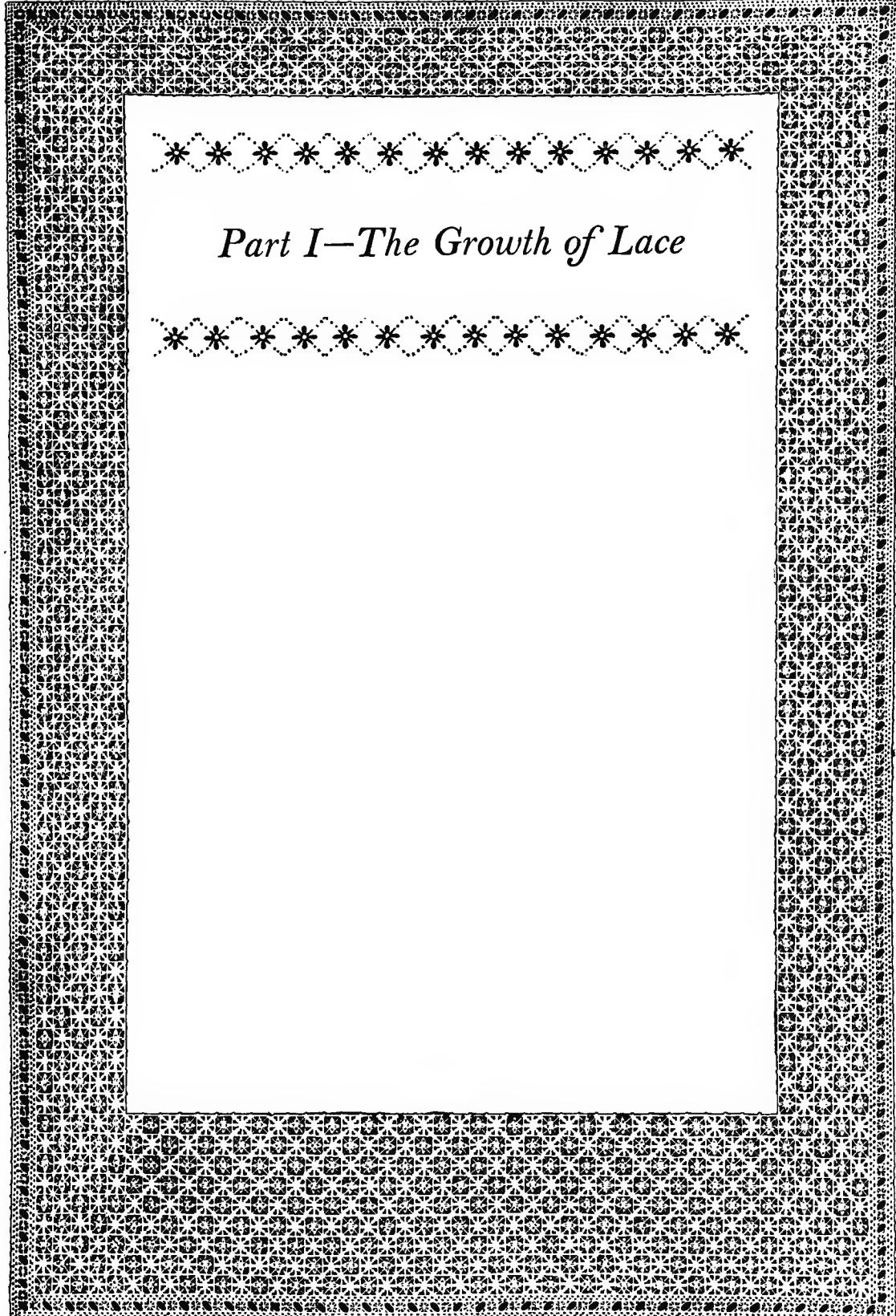
PLATE	FACING	PAGE
I. Early Italian drawn-work . . . . .		6
II. Cut-work, with squares of embroidery . . . . .		10
III. Lucrezia Ricasoli né Zanchino . . . . .		12
IV. Lacis, and Venetian drawn-work . . . . .		14
V. Donna Emilia Spinelli . . . . .		18
VI. Donna Portia Rossi . . . . .		20
VII. The Gonfaloniere Peretti . . . . .		24
VIII. Faustina, wife of Count John of Nassau . . . . .		28
IX. Bossuet . . . . .		32
X. Marie-Pauline Bonaparte . . . . .		36
XI. Empress Eugénie . . . . .		38
XII. Cornelis de Graef . . . . .		42
XIII. Silver Point d'Espagne . . . . .		48
XIV. George Washington . . . . .		52

### PART II

XV. Princess Eleonora di Mantova . . . . .	58
XVI. Eleanor of Toledo . . . . .	60
XVII. "Punto in Aria" . . . . .	62
XVIII. Gros Point de Venise . . . . .	64
XIX. Gros Point, and Punto tagliato . . . . .	66
XX. "Leader of choir of Henry IV" . . . . .	68
XXI. Point de Venise à Réseau . . . . .	70
XXII. Gold Lace . . . . .	72
XXIII. Thomas Francis Carignan . . . . .	74
XXIV. Italian bobbin-made lappet . . . . .	76
XXV. Italian bobbin-made flounce . . . . .	78
XXVI. Marie de Medicis . . . . .	80
XXVII. Bobbin-made flounce . . . . .	82
XXVIII. Shawl made from pith of the Aloe . . . . .	84

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

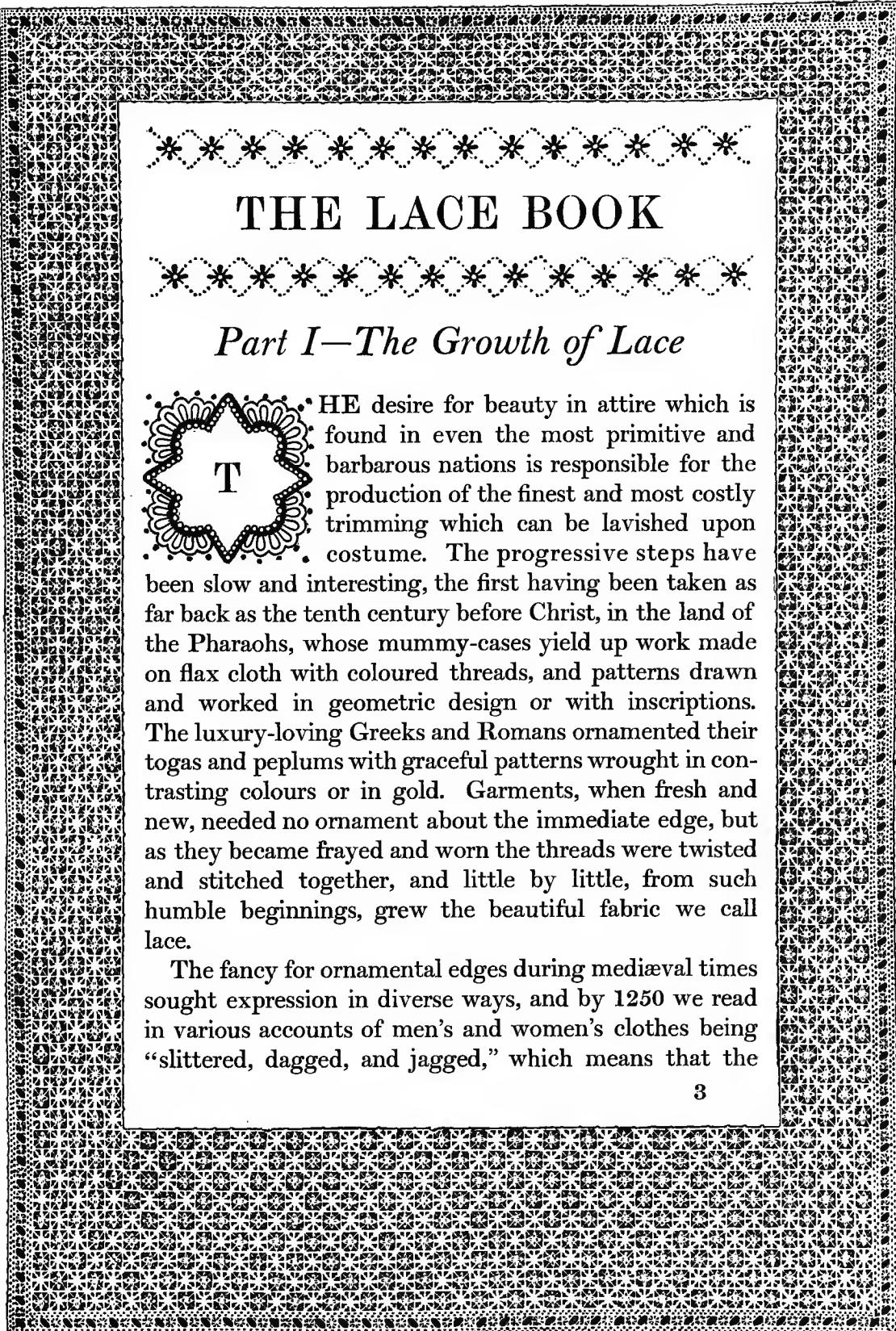
PLATE	PART III	FACING PAGE
XXIX. "Little Princess" . . . . .	PART III	88
XXX. Bobbin-made Flemish lace, and Mechlin . . . . .		90
XXXI. Portrait of a Young Man . . . . .		94
XXXII. Portion of a cap . . . . .		96
XXXIII. Francis Henry of Orange . . . . .		98
XXXIV. Point d'Angleterre à Réseau . . . . .		100
XXXV. Rubens' Wife, by Frans Hals . . . . .		102
XXXVI. "Fausse Valenciennes" . . . . .		104
XXXVII. Portrait of his daughter by Cuyp . . . . .		108
XXXVIII. Duchesse de Nemours . . . . .		112
PART IV		
XXXIX. Court ball in time of Henry III of France . . . . .	PART IV	118
XL. Claudia, daughter of Henry II and Catherine de Medici . . . . .		122
XLI. James Stuart and his sister Louisa . . . . .		126
XLII. Point d'Alençon . . . . .		130
XLIII. "Unknown Princesses" . . . . .		134
XLIV. Charles de France and Marie-Adélaïde . . . . .		138
XLV. "Vrai Valenciennes" and Old black Chantilly . . . . .		140
XLVI. Queen Marie-Antoinette . . . . .		144
XLVII. La Duchesse d'Aumale . . . . .		148
XLVIII. Spanish needle point . . . . .		150
XLIX. White Spanish blonde . . . . .		154
L. Chalice veil and silk Maltese bobbin lace . . . . .		158
LI. Henrietta Anna, Duchesse d'Orleans . . . . .		162
PART V		
LII. Old Honiton . . . . .	PART V	168
LIII. Buckinghamshire lace . . . . .		174
LIV. Devonshire Trolley lace, Bedfordshire "Baby lace," and Buckinghamshire Trolley lace . . . . .		178
LV. English bobbin-made lace, and Honiton . . . . .		182
LVI. Irish crochet lace . . . . .		186
LVII. Limerick Appliquéd lace . . . . .		190
LVIII. Point de Gaze and Point d'Alençon XX Century . . . . .		196



*Part I—The Growth of Lace*

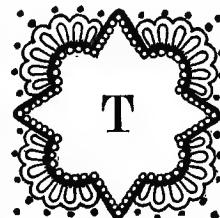
“*AND here the needle plies its busy task,  
The pattern grows, the well-depicted flower,  
Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,  
Unfolds its bosom, buds and leaves and sprigs,  
And curling tendrils, gracefully dispersed,  
Follow the nimble fingers of the fair—  
A wreath that cannot fade of flowers that blow  
With most success when all besides decay.*”

— COWPER.



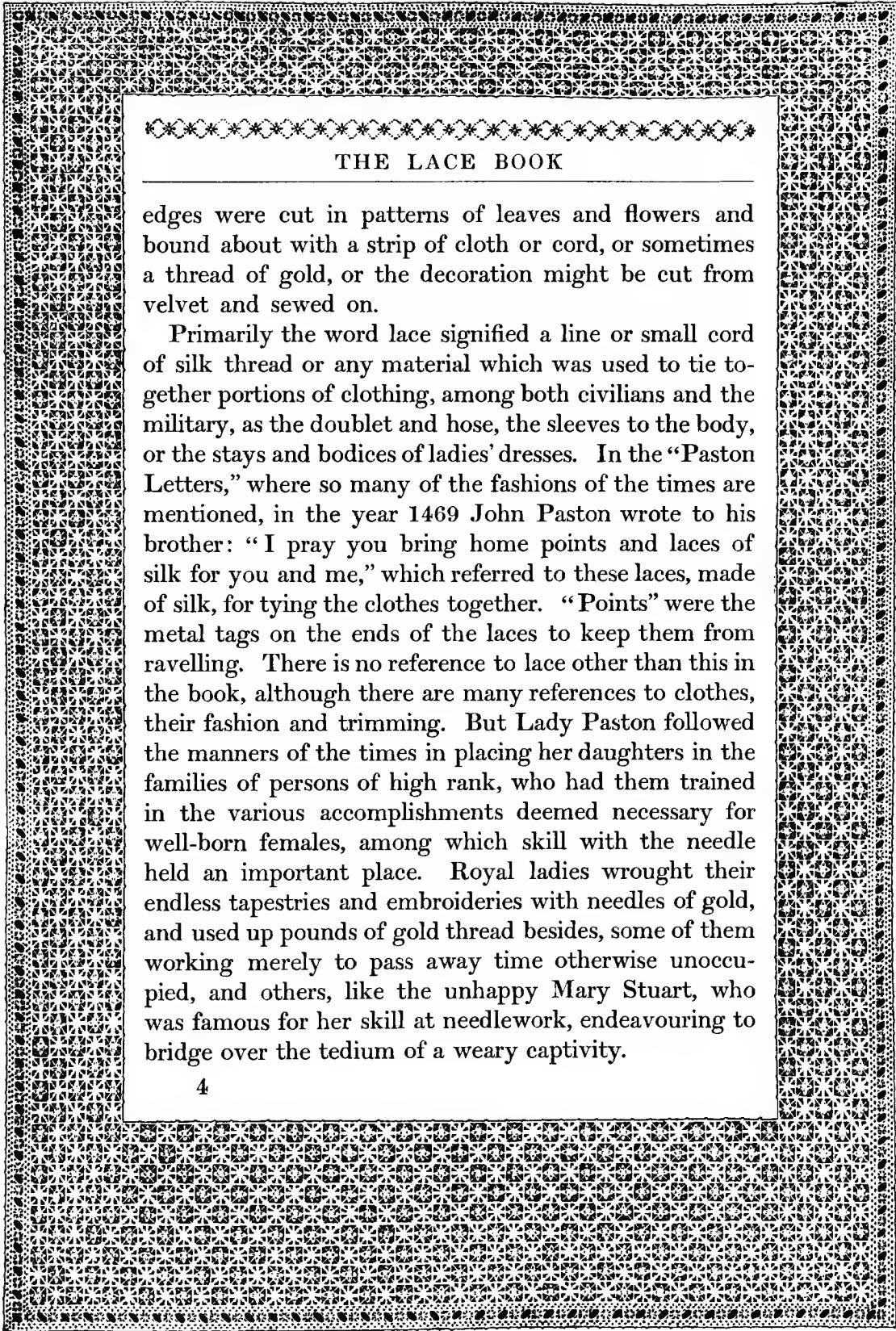
# THE LACE BOOK

## *Part I—The Growth of Lace*



THE desire for beauty in attire which is found in even the most primitive and barbarous nations is responsible for the production of the finest and most costly trimming which can be lavished upon costume. The progressive steps have been slow and interesting, the first having been taken as far back as the tenth century before Christ, in the land of the Pharaohs, whose mummy-cases yield up work made on flax cloth with coloured threads, and patterns drawn and worked in geometric design or with inscriptions. The luxury-loving Greeks and Romans ornamented their togas and peplums with graceful patterns wrought in contrasting colours or in gold. Garments, when fresh and new, needed no ornament about the immediate edge, but as they became frayed and worn the threads were twisted and stitched together, and little by little, from such humble beginnings, grew the beautiful fabric we call lace.

The fancy for ornamental edges during mediæval times sought expression in diverse ways, and by 1250 we read in various accounts of men's and women's clothes being "slittered, dagged, and jagged," which means that the



## THE LACE BOOK

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edges were cut in patterns of leaves and flowers and bound about with a strip of cloth or cord, or sometimes a thread of gold, or the decoration might be cut from velvet and sewed on.

Primarily the word lace signified a line or small cord of silk thread or any material which was used to tie together portions of clothing, among both civilians and the military, as the doublet and hose, the sleeves to the body, or the stays and bodices of ladies' dresses. In the "Paston Letters," where so many of the fashions of the times are mentioned, in the year 1469 John Paston wrote to his brother: "I pray you bring home points and laces of silk for you and me," which referred to these laces, made of silk, for tying the clothes together. "Points" were the metal tags on the ends of the laces to keep them from ravelling. There is no reference to lace other than this in the book, although there are many references to clothes, their fashion and trimming. But Lady Paston followed the manners of the times in placing her daughters in the families of persons of high rank, who had them trained in the various accomplishments deemed necessary for well-born females, among which skill with the needle held an important place. Royal ladies wrought their endless tapestries and embroideries with needles of gold, and used up pounds of gold thread besides, some of them working merely to pass away time otherwise unoccupied, and others, like the unhappy Mary Stuart, who was famous for her skill at needlework, endeavouring to bridge over the tedium of a weary captivity.

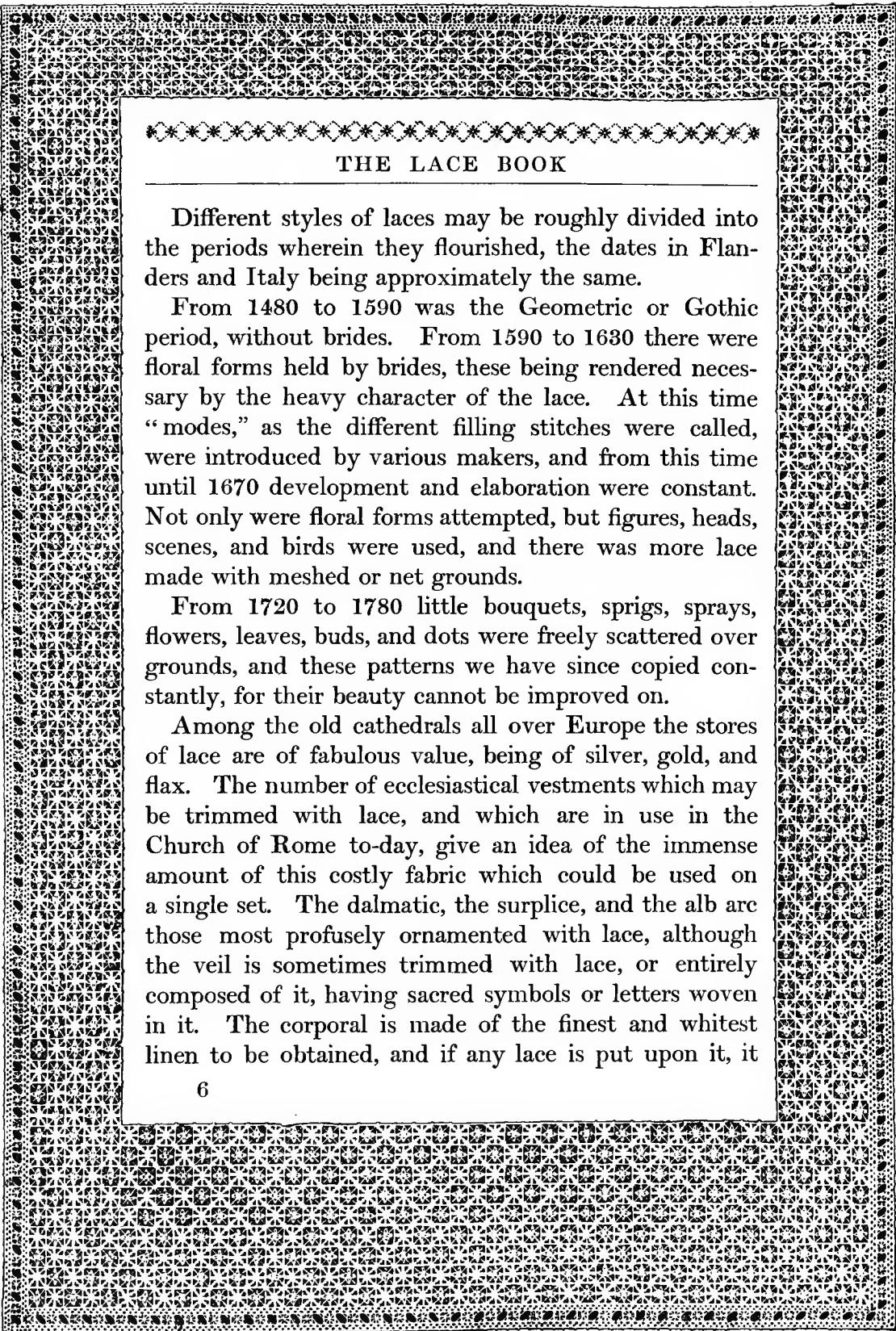
## THE GROWTH OF LACE

No two languages use the same word for this fabric. In English it is lace, from *lacier*, to fasten. Lace in French is either *passement*, *dentelle*, or *guipure*. The Germans call it *spitzen*; the Italians, *merletto* or *trina*; *pizzo* is the Genoese, while the Spaniards call it *encaje*. Flanders calls its priceless product *peerlen*, while the Dutch have it *kanten*, and the Portuguese, *renda*.

Two countries claim to be the birthplace of lace,—Flanders and Italy; and while the Dutch have contributed more to the making of thread lace, it seems undoubtedly true that Italy was first in the field with this beautiful adornment, but in its earlier form of gold and silver, and later with coarse threads of flax. It is in the Italian inventories that the earliest mention is made of lace, and Italy long sustained her supremacy in the production of superb points. She worked right on, even though other countries, envious of the immense sums which poured into her coffers, sought to prohibit the sale of her wares, and in retaliation, during the reign of Louis XIV, when her work-people were drawn to France, framed the following laws:

“If any artist or handicraftsman practices his art in any foreign land, to the detriment of the Republic, orders to return will be sent him; if he disobeys them, his nearest kin will be put in prison, in order that through his interest in their welfare his obedience may be compelled.

“If he comes back, his past offence will be condoned, and employment for him will be found in Venice; but if, notwithstanding the imprisonment of his nearest of kin, he obstinately decides to continue living abroad, an emissary will be commissioned to kill him, and his next of kin will be liberated only after his death.”



## THE LACE BOOK

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Different styles of laces may be roughly divided into the periods wherein they flourished, the dates in Flanders and Italy being approximately the same.

From 1480 to 1590 was the Geometric or Gothic period, without brides. From 1590 to 1630 there were floral forms held by brides, these being rendered necessary by the heavy character of the lace. At this time "modes," as the different filling stitches were called, were introduced by various makers, and from this time until 1670 development and elaboration were constant. Not only were floral forms attempted, but figures, heads, scenes, and birds were used, and there was more lace made with meshed or net grounds.

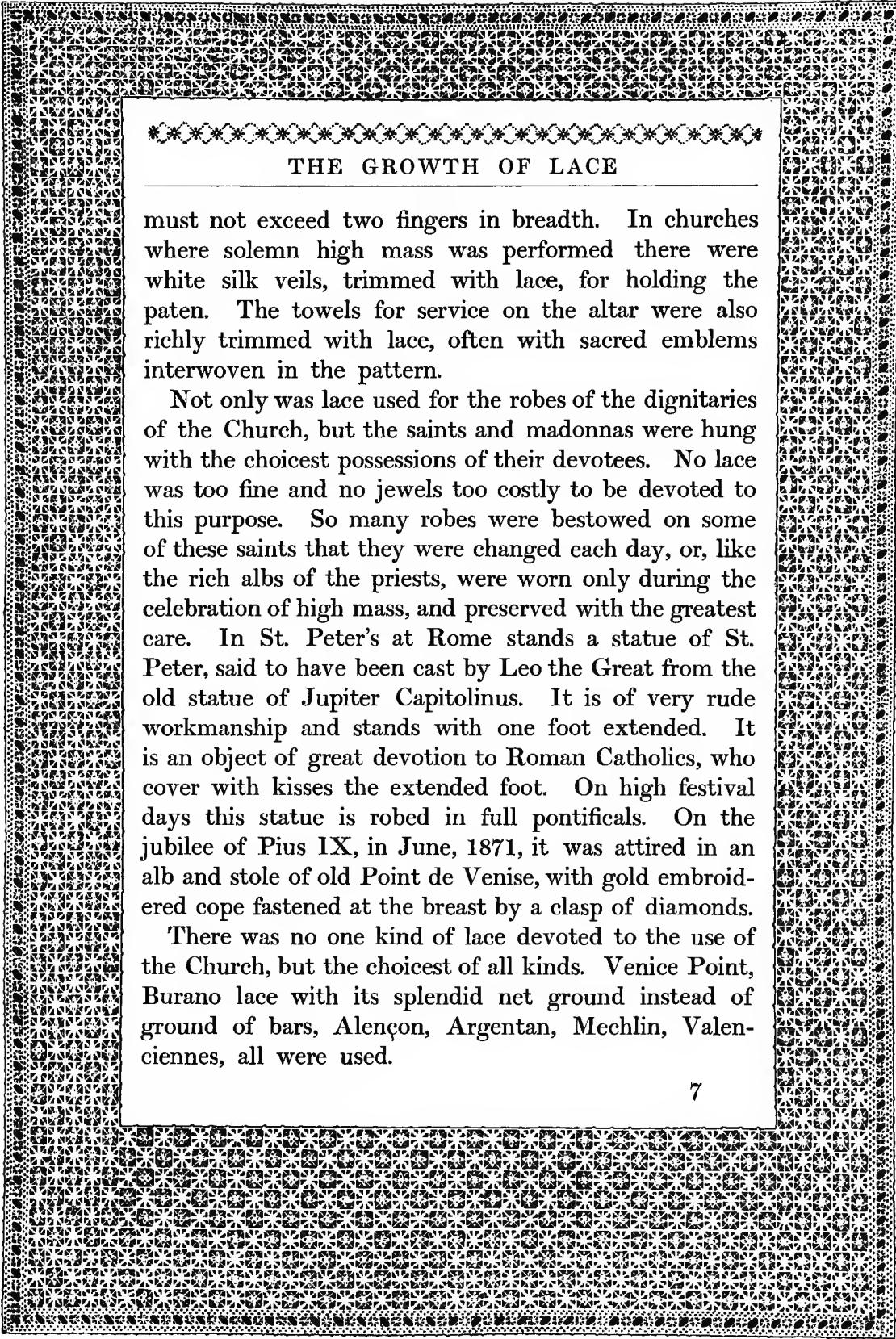
From 1720 to 1780 little bouquets, sprigs, sprays, flowers, leaves, buds, and dots were freely scattered over grounds, and these patterns we have since copied constantly, for their beauty cannot be improved on.

Among the old cathedrals all over Europe the stores of lace are of fabulous value, being of silver, gold, and flax. The number of ecclesiastical vestments which may be trimmed with lace, and which are in use in the Church of Rome to-day, give an idea of the immense amount of this costly fabric which could be used on a single set. The dalmatic, the surplice, and the alb are those most profusely ornamented with lace, although the veil is sometimes trimmed with lace, or entirely composed of it, having sacred symbols or letters woven in it. The corporal is made of the finest and whitest linen to be obtained, and if any lace is put upon it, it



**P**LATE I.—*Early Italian drawn-work. The background is formed by a dark thread stitched over the net-work left by drawing some of the threads of the linen foundation. Fifteenth Century.*





## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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must not exceed two fingers in breadth. In churches where solemn high mass was performed there were white silk veils, trimmed with lace, for holding the paten. The towels for service on the altar were also richly trimmed with lace, often with sacred emblems interwoven in the pattern.

Not only was lace used for the robes of the dignitaries of the Church, but the saints and madonnas were hung with the choicest possessions of their devotees. No lace was too fine and no jewels too costly to be devoted to this purpose. So many robes were bestowed on some of these saints that they were changed each day, or, like the rich albs of the priests, were worn only during the celebration of high mass, and preserved with the greatest care. In St. Peter's at Rome stands a statue of St. Peter, said to have been cast by Leo the Great from the old statue of Jupiter Capitolinus. It is of very rude workmanship and stands with one foot extended. It is an object of great devotion to Roman Catholics, who cover with kisses the extended foot. On high festival days this statue is robed in full pontificals. On the jubilee of Pius IX, in June, 1871, it was attired in an alb and stole of old Point de Venise, with gold embroidered cope fastened at the breast by a clasp of diamonds.

There was no one kind of lace devoted to the use of the Church, but the choicest of all kinds. Venice Point, Burano lace with its splendid net ground instead of ground of bars, Alençon, Argentan, Mechlin, Valenciennes, all were used.

## THE LACE BOOK

The island of Burano, near Venice, had long been famed for its splendid laces. Of course its cathedral was not forgotten, and the sets made for the use of the Church are superb. The old ones, which are now a deep coffee colour, cannot be surpassed by the modern ones, beautiful though these be. The firm and solid character of this lace has enabled it to defy the ravages of time, and in the revival of the industry the workers have been able to copy the ancient laces which were so much esteemed. Queen Margherita of Italy became much interested in the revival of this ancient industry, and lent many pieces from her own splendid collection for reproduction. The most celebrated of these was a flounce and chasuble made for Pope Clement XIII (1693-1769) at Burano some hundreds of years ago. The favourite subjects for design are wheat ears and vine leaves, and these are woven into numberless patterns of great beauty.

Nor was the convent or the paid worker the only source from which the Church drew her rich store of laces. Great ladies have devoted years of patient effort to making the lace to decorate altar or vestment, and in many cases rivalled the skill of their sisters in the convent.

In some ecclesiastical families the laces belonged to the members of the family rather than to the individual, and have grown steadily in magnitude and richness.

The laces of the Vatican are well known for their sumptuous character, and the work which is constantly bestowed on them keeps them in perfect repair.

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THE GROWTH OF LACE

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In England, till the time of the Reformation, lace was used on the altar of every parish church. When these stone altars were abolished, and tables standing on a frame were introduced, about 1565, by Queen Elizabeth's order, the fine old laces disappeared, to reappear in some new form in the homes of those whose interest in the Church allowed them to get possession of them.

While the anathemas of the Church were loudly directed at undue extravagance in matters pertaining both to dress and to indulgences at the table, there was no class which wore richer garments, furred or laced, or on whose table could be found rarer dainties or sweeter wines, than those of the princes of the Church. In France the lace worn by the Churchmen was of the greatest value and beauty, of home manufacture as well as of the splendid Venice and Flanders Points. The laces of the Rohan family were heirlooms and of enormous value. The Baroness de Oberkirch, in the "Memoirs of the Court of Louis XVI," speaks of seeing the Cardinal de Rohan, coming out of his chapel,—

—“dressed in a *soutane* of scarlet moiré and rochet of English lace of inestimable value. When on great occasions he officiates at Versailles, he wears an alb of old lace, needle point, of such beauty that his assistants are almost afraid to touch it. His arms and device are worked in a medallion above large flowers. This alb is estimated at 100,000 livres. On the day of which I speak he wore the rochet of English lace, one of his least beautiful, as his secretary, the Abbé Georget, told me.”

The Hebrews also used lace in their religious ceremonies, and their *talith* or praying scarf was often very



## THE LACE BOOK

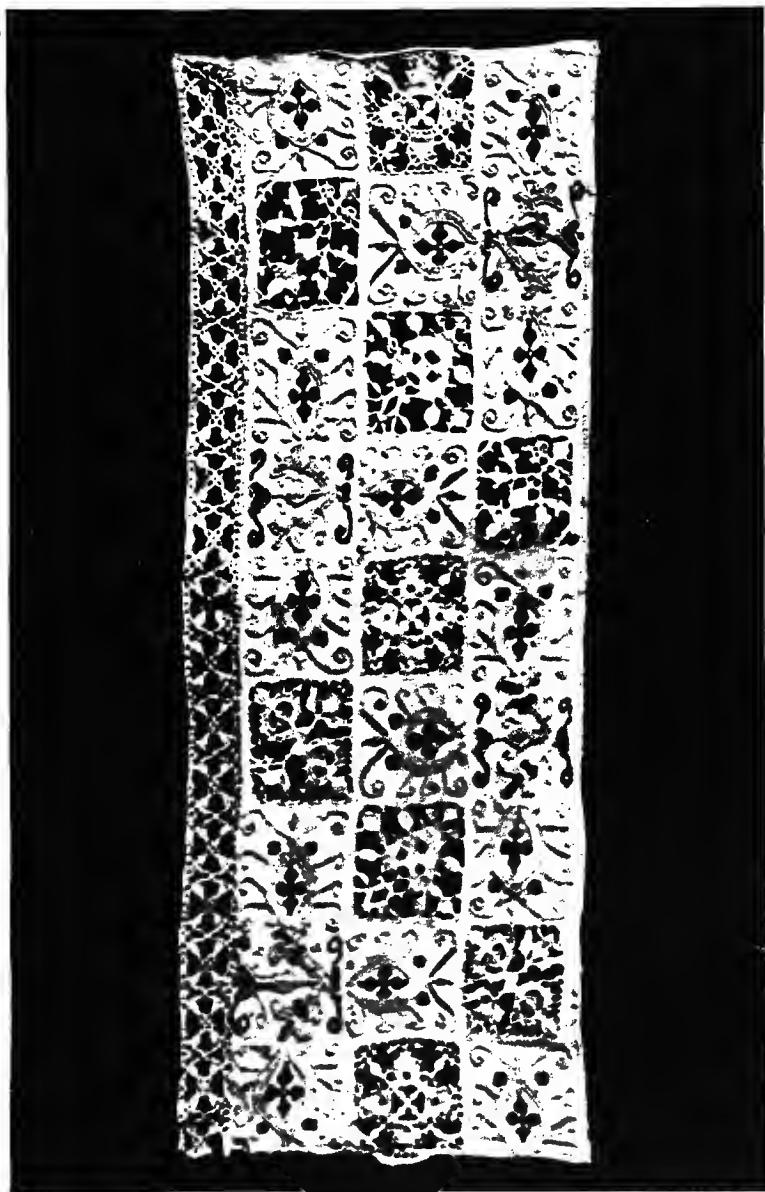
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beautifully trimmed with lace, if not made of it entirely. Hebrew law forbade a mixture of materials in these scarfs, so, when the body of the scarf was made of silk, the lace was of silk also. This silk lace was made with the needle, of course, and was like the other laces of the period except in material. The beautiful Gros Point de Venise is exceedingly rich when made in a silk which has grown to a deep cream with age, and looks even more like carved ivory than when made of thread.

In the reign of Henry VIII of England the Wardrobe Accounts show that by 1539 shirts had become quite common, at least with those who could afford them,—for among this monarch's New Year's gifts were shirts embroidered with threads of gold and silver as well as with black or "blew" thread, which latter made a very picturesque and ornamental trimming. This coloured embroidery was in fashion during both the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In "Religious Ceremonies," published in 1731, appears a direction that a cross shall be worked in "blew thred" to denote the spot where the altar cloth shall be kissed.

In 1605, in a play called "Laugh and Lie Down; or, The World's Folly," a handkerchief is thus spoken of: "It was a simple napkin wrought with Coventry blue,"—the making of this blue thread being the great industry of that city.

In 1575 Queen Elizabeth made one of her progresses to "Killingwoorth Castl in Warwick Sheer." The Earl of Leicester exerted himself for her entertainment, and



**PLATE II.**—*Cut-work, with squares of embroidery. Sixteenth Century, Italian.*





## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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in one of the many pageants an ancient minstrel performed, whose appearance and dress are minutely described in "An Essay on the Ancient Minstrels" in "Percy's Reliques."

"A person very meet seemed he for the purpose, of forty-five years old, apparell'd partly as he would himself. His cap off; his head seemly rounded Tonsterwise; fair kemb'd, that with a sponge daintly dipt in a little capon's greace was finely smoothed, to make it shine like a mallard's wing. His beard smugly shaven; and yet his shirt after the new trink, with ruffs fair starched, sleeked and glistening like a pair of new shoes, marshalled in good order with a setting stick and strut, that every ruff stood up like a wafer. A side gown of Kendal green, after the freshness of the year now, gathered at the neck with a narrow gorget, fastened afore with a white clasp and a Keeper close up to the chin, but easily, for heat to undo when he list. Seemly begirt in a red caddis girdle; from that a pair of capped Sheffield Knives hanging a' two sides. Out of his bosom drawn forth a lappet of his napkin edged with a blue lace, and marked with a true love, a heart, and a D for Damian, for he was but a bachelor yet. His gown had side sleeves down to midleg, slit from the shoulder to the hand, and lined with white cotton. His doublet-sleeves of black worsted, upon them a pair of poynets of tawny chamlet laced along the wrist with blue threaden points, a wealt towards the hand of fustian-a-napes. A pair of red neather stocks. A pair of pumps on his feet, with a cross-cut at the toes for corns; not new indeed, yet cleanly blackt with soot, and shining as a shoing-horn."

There is a portrait of Henry VIII, showing him in a costume with ruffles at the hand, and an entry occurs in the wardrobe book, of a pair of sleeves, "ruff'd at the hands with strawberry leaves and flowers of golde embroidered with black silke." Also a pair of sleeves of "redd cloth of gold with cut workes."

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THE LACE BOOK

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There had been many acts passed during the reign of Edward IV (1461–1483) regulating wearing-apparel, and during the reign of Henry VII (1485–1509) gold and silver lace as well as thread became an article of commerce from Italy. There must have been considerable traffic in this fabric, for an act was passed prohibiting the sale of a packet of lace as a pound when it did not weigh twelve ounces, and that the contents of said packets should contain lace of the same goodness and colour as that displayed on the outside, the crafty Venetians considering it allowable to make more than a just profit by giving short weight and inferior quality. Queen Elizabeth of York pays in 1502 quite a sum for laces, and Friar Hercules is also paid for “gold of Venys,” and “for making a lace for the King’s mantell of the Garter.”

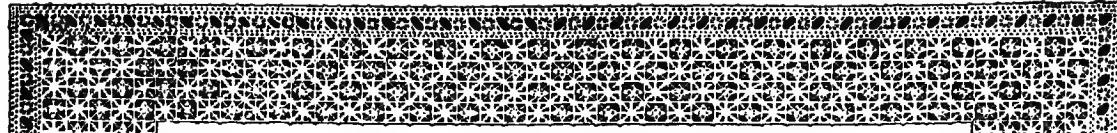
Queen Mary, whose thoughts were not fixed on “app’l,” nevertheless continued some of the laws of Henry VIII’s making, in which “ruffles made or wrought out of England, commonly called cut work, are forbidden to any one under the degree of a baron.” No woman whose station was of less degree than the “wife of a knight might deck herself with lace, or passement lace of gold or silver, with sleeves, partlet or linen trimmed with purles of gold or silver, whitework or cut work made beyond the sea.”

It was in the second year of Elizabeth’s reign that the great ruffs came in, trimmed with the beautiful thread Guipure of the period, and requiring stiffening to keep



**PLATE III.**—*Lucrezia Ricasoli ne Zanchino.*  
*Gimp lace, probably made at Ragusa. Sixteenth Century.*





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THE GROWTH OF LACE

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them in shape. Starching became necessary, and women to do this business were brought from Holland.

In 1564 Mistress Dingham Van Der Plasse, a Fleming, came to London and pursued the business of a starcher of ruffs, and taught the intricate process to others. The clergy fell afoul of starching, and Stubbes, besides inveighing against it, mentions also—

—“a certain device made of wires, crested for the purpose, and whipped all over either with gold thread, silver or lace for supporting these ruffs and called a supertasse or underpropper. . . .

“Great ruffs or neckerchers, made of hollande, lawne, cambric, and such cloths,” so fine and delicate that the greatest thread in them “shall not be so great as the least hair that is, starched, streaked, dried, patted, and underpropped by the supertasses, the stately arches of pride, towered over three or four minor ruffs placed one below another.” The outer, or “master-devil ruff,” was very rich, decked with “gold, silver, or silk lace of stately price, wrought all over with needle-work, speckled and sparkled here and there with the sun, the moon, the stars, and many other antiques strange to behold; some are wrought with open work down to the midst of the ruff and further; some with close work, some with purled lace, and other gew-gaws, so clogged, so pestered that the ruff is the least part of itself. Sometimes they are primmed up to the ears, and sometimes they are suffered to hang over the shoulders like flags or wind-mill sails, fluttering in the air.”

In Mrs. Bury Palliser’s “History of Lace,” which covers the whole subject in such a comprehensive manner, the “Great Wardrobe Accounts” of Queen Elizabeth’s time are freely drawn on. Abundant evidences are given in them of the magnificent way in which her Majesty’s wardrobe was furnished forth, not only with what she bought, but with the splendid gifts

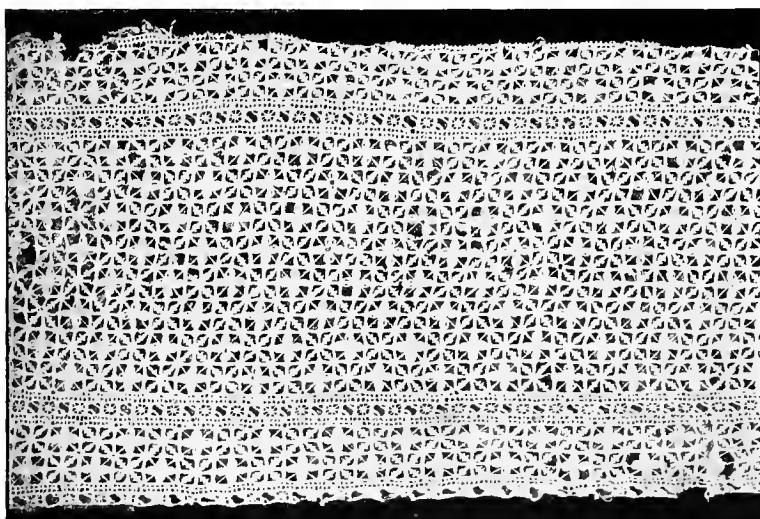
## THE LACE BOOK

from subjects, which were rather in the nature of a tax than evidence of a desire to give.

In 1577 Lady Ratcliffe gave the Queen for a New Year's gift a night coif of white cut-work, flourished with silver and set with spangles. Sir Philip Sidney on the same occasion gave a pair of cuffs of cut-work. In the Wardrobe Accounts this cut-work is mentioned as being of both Flemish and Italian make, the latter being the more costly.

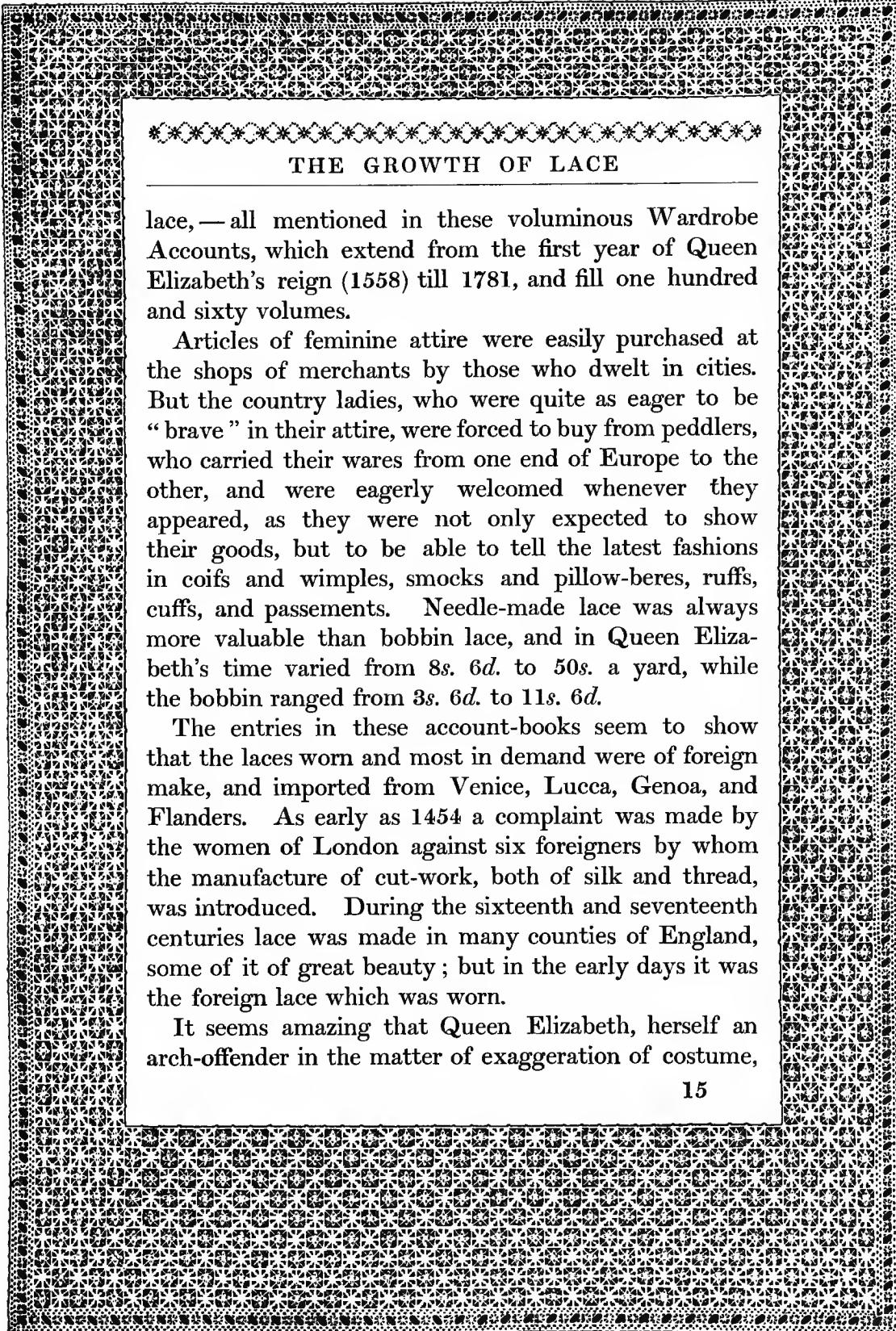
Besides the cut-work, mention is frequently made of other kinds of lace. "Bone lace" heads the list, and was so called from the use of fish-bones, which were scraped down to the proper size, instead of pins. The bobbins were also made of bones, the small bones in pig's "trotters" being those generally chosen, — in England, at any rate. Italy used, besides small bones, bobbins of wood, with sometimes a pretty bead set in or a bit of silver. Mrs. Palliser says that lead bobbins were also in use, but the weight of these would seem to be prohibitory. After a time the bone bobbins were replaced with those made of wood, and the term bone lace becomes less frequent.

“ Bobbin lace ” was next in order, and afterward there was scarcely any end to the various trimmings which the Virgin Queen lavished upon herself, although she kept a stern eye on any too excessive gaudiness in the apparel of her loyal subjects. “ Crown lace,” as its name implies, had devices of crowns ; then there was “ Hollow lace,” “Parchment,” “Spanish,” “Fringe and Diamond ”



**PLATE IV.**—*A. Lacis, or darned net-work.*  
*Sixteenth Century. B. Venetian drawn-work.*  
*Fifteenth Century.*





## THE GROWTH OF LACE

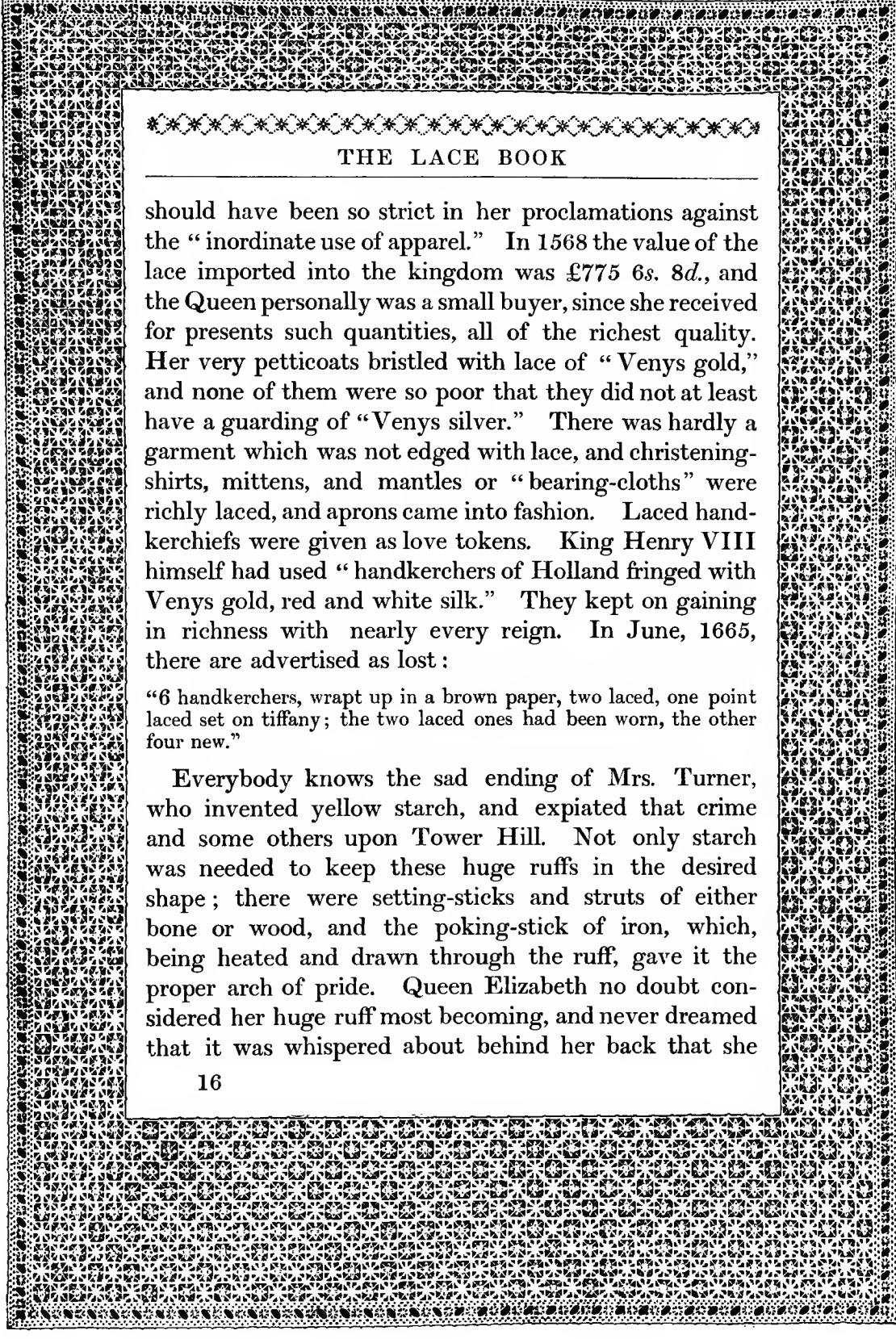
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lace,— all mentioned in these voluminous Wardrobe Accounts, which extend from the first year of Queen Elizabeth's reign (1558) till 1781, and fill one hundred and sixty volumes.

Articles of feminine attire were easily purchased at the shops of merchants by those who dwelt in cities. But the country ladies, who were quite as eager to be “brave” in their attire, were forced to buy from peddlers, who carried their wares from one end of Europe to the other, and were eagerly welcomed whenever they appeared, as they were not only expected to show their goods, but to be able to tell the latest fashions in coifs and wimples, smocks and pillow-beres, ruffs, cuffs, and passemens. Needle-made lace was always more valuable than bobbin lace, and in Queen Elizabeth's time varied from 8*s.* 6*d.* to 50*s.* a yard, while the bobbin ranged from 3*s.* 6*d.* to 11*s.* 6*d.*

The entries in these account-books seem to show that the laces worn and most in demand were of foreign make, and imported from Venice, Lucca, Genoa, and Flanders. As early as 1454 a complaint was made by the women of London against six foreigners by whom the manufacture of cut-work, both of silk and thread, was introduced. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries lace was made in many counties of England, some of it of great beauty; but in the early days it was the foreign lace which was worn.

It seems amazing that Queen Elizabeth, herself an arch-offender in the matter of exaggeration of costume,



## THE LACE BOOK

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should have been so strict in her proclamations against the “inordinate use of apparel.” In 1568 the value of the lace imported into the kingdom was £775 6s. 8d., and the Queen personally was a small buyer, since she received for presents such quantities, all of the richest quality. Her very petticoats bristled with lace of “Venys gold,” and none of them were so poor that they did not at least have a guarding of “Venys silver.” There was hardly a garment which was not edged with lace, and christening-shirts, mittens, and mantles or “bearing-cloths” were richly laced, and aprons came into fashion. Laced handkerchiefs were given as love tokens. King Henry VIII himself had used “handkerchers of Holland fringed with Venys gold, red and white silk.” They kept on gaining in richness with nearly every reign. In June, 1665, there are advertised as lost :

“6 handkerchers, wrapt up in a brown paper, two laced, one point laced set on tiffany; the two laced ones had been worn, the other four new.”

Everybody knows the sad ending of Mrs. Turner, who invented yellow starch, and expiated that crime and some others upon Tower Hill. Not only starch was needed to keep these huge ruffs in the desired shape; there were setting-sticks and struts of either bone or wood, and the poking-stick of iron, which, being heated and drawn through the ruff, gave it the proper arch of pride. Queen Elizabeth no doubt considered her huge ruff most becoming, and never dreamed that it was whispered about behind her back that she

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THE GROWTH OF LACE

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had the "yellowest throat in all England" and wore the huge gorget to conceal it. In the face of such extravagance as we know her to pardon in her own person, Queen Bess ordered that—

"neither also shoulde any person use or weare such great and excessive ruffs, in or about the uppermost part of their necks, as had not been used before two yeares past; but that all persons shoulde in modest and semely sort leave off such fonde, disguised, and monstrous manner of attyring themselves as both was unsupportable for charges and undecent to be worn."

Stranger to us, in these days, would be the laces woven from human hair, the soft and silky white being that most often chosen. Mary Stuart had a small piece of hair lace given her by the Countess of Lennox, woven from her own white hair.

The clergy and those rich and powerful nobles of Scotland who could receive their "passements" and guards from France and Italy, as did the rest of the world, used them no doubt according to the fashion of the times. Mary Stuart's arrival in her dominions stimulated yet further elegance of attire, and in her Wardrobe Accounts of 1567 are found records of passements and Guipures, gold and silver lace, and most of the varieties of thread lace then known. The national dress of Scotland precluded the use of lace of a delicate character, and an account of the costume of the women, written by Martin in 1703, is as follows :

"The plaid for women, being plaited all around, was tied with a belt below the breast. . . . They wore sleeves of scarlet cloth, closed at the end as men's vests, with gold lace round 'em, having plate buttons set with fine stones."

## THE LACE BOOK

The bulk of the people not wearing lace, little was made except among the great, who worked at it themselves and had their maidens make it, so that petticoat and apron, neckerchief and fly cap need not be without it. The quantities made by the captive Queen Mary seem almost incredible, fashioned from patterns designed by herself, "after nature," of birds, fishes, beasts, and flowers. Of the latter 52 patterns, of four-footed beasts 16, and of birds 124, were mentioned in her inventory.

The sumptuary laws in England regarding dress must have been carried out in a half-hearted way, for during the early days of the reign of James I (1603) the ruff, double, single, three and four piled, was the fashion still. The clergy yet railed at them, and "deep ruffs and shallow ruffs, thick ruffs and thin ruffs, double and no ruffs" were denounced from the pulpit.

In 1607, according to a play of the period called "What You Will," a gentleman's dress, as described by his servant, was as follows :

"A cloak lined with rich taffeta, a white satin suit, the jerkin covered with gold lace, a chain of pearl, a gilt rapier in an embroidered hanger, pearl-colored silk stockings, and massive silver spurs."

The granting of monopolies "as numerous as the frogs of Egypt," and then the rescinding of them, occupied King James's attention for twenty years. The importation of gold and silver lace was the perquisite of the Earl of Suffolk, and no doubt he saw to it that plenty was worn.



**P**LATE V.—*Donna Emilia Spinelli. Ruff of linen trimmed with Reticella or drawn-work and edged with Gothic Point. Sixteenth Century.*



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## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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As early as the middle of the sixteenth century there were many styles of cloaks,—

“Genoa cloaks, French, Spanish, and Dutch cloaks; some of cloth, silk, velvet, taffata, and such like. . . . Some short, reaching to the girdlestead or waist, some to the knees, and others trailing upon the ground, resembling gowns rather than cloaks. Then they are guarded with velvet guards, or else faced with costly lace, either of gold or silver, or at least of silk three or four fingers broad down the back, about the skirts and every where else.”

When Queen Anne, wife of James I, was hurried over from Scotland to sit on the English throne, her scant wardrobe was replenished for the moment from the reliques of Queen Elizabeth’s magnificence. But as soon as possible she bought a good wardrobe for herself, and lace in plenty, “little bone lace,” “great bone lace,” and “18 yards of fine lace, at 6s. the yard,” and yards upon yards more.

All accounts of the period tell how Prince Charlie and his companion the Duke of Buckingham ruffled it in Spain when the marriage with the Infanta was in prospect. One item in “Extraordinary Expenses for Prince Charles’s Journey to Spain” (1623) is: “95 dozen rich silver double diamond and cross laces.” Not only were rich presents sent from England to the Spanish princess, but when the negotiations were fairly under way great preparations were made by the Infanta herself, according to the letters of James Howell, who was in Spain at the time.

“She is preparing divers suits of rich clothes for his Highness of perfumed amber leather, some embroidered with pearl, some with gold and some with silver.”

## THE LACE BOOK

The English Ambassador was so sure the marriage was to come off that he—

— “caused above thirty rich liveries to be made of watchet velvet (pale blue), with silver lace up to the very capes of the cloaks, the best sorts whereof were valued at £80 a livery.”

It seems as if Buckingham must have almost outshone the prospective bridegroom in the magnificence of his attire and the superb jewels he wore, which, by the way, were none too tightly sewed on, so that a few occasionally fell off, to be picked up by whoever would stoop for them, since their haughty owner would not do this, nor would he receive those that had once fallen on the floor. In "Curiosities of Literature," D'Israeli writes :

"Buckingham had twenty-seven suits of clothes made, the

Buckingham had twenty-seven sets of clothes made, the Queeness that embroidery, lace, silk, velvet, silver, gold, and gems could contribute."

Speaking of the Spaniards, Howell says (1623):

“ His gravity is much lessen’d since the late proclamation came out against ruffs, and the king himself shew’d the first example ; they were come to that height of excess herein that twenty shillings were us’d to be paid for starching of a ruff ; and some, tho’ perhaps he had never a shirt to his back, yet he would have a totting huge swelling ruff about his neck.”

After the intricate ruff with its treble-quadruple plaiting, the fashion for what was known as "standing bands" came in. These were of linen either starched or wired to stand up stiffly, and edged with lace. They were seen as early as 1604, and were worn by persons of quality till the middle of the seventeenth century. Even before the standing band went out entirely, the "falling



**P**LATE VI.—*Donna Portia de Rossi. Ruff of Reticella or drawn-work, edged with Gothic Point. Sixteenth Century.*



## THE GROWTH OF LACE

band" came in, and was bordered by lace, embroidery, cut-work, or even pearls. It may be said that in King Charles's reign the ruff finally died, and falling bands became the mode. These latter were worn by all classes save judges, and must have been very much more comfortable than the ruffs which preceded them. With them came "band strings," so called, to tie or fasten them. These were often very rich, and were made with the collar or sold separately. Sometimes they were plaited, or made with bobbins, being finished with a medallion of lace or merely a tassel. "Snake-bone band strings" are mentioned by 1652. It is agreed that the reign of Charles I (1625-1648) was the most elegant and picturesque in the line of costume ever known in England. Because Van Dyck painted at this time and made the dress such a feature of many of his wonderful pictures, the costume has become known by his name. The perfection of this courtly costume was not reached until about the middle of the reign, for during the first decade the dress of his father's (James I's) time still prevailed. To the completed dress of the gallant of say 1630 almost every European nation had contributed its quota, and in Ben Jonson's comedy of "The New Inn," first performed in 1629, a beau observes:

“ I would put on  
The Savoy chain, about my neck the ruff,  
The cuff of Flanders ; then the Naples hat  
With the Rome hat-band and the Florentine agate,  
The Milan sword, the cloak of Geneva set  
With Brabant buttons, all my given pieces,  
My gloves, the natives of Madrid.”

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THE LACE BOOK

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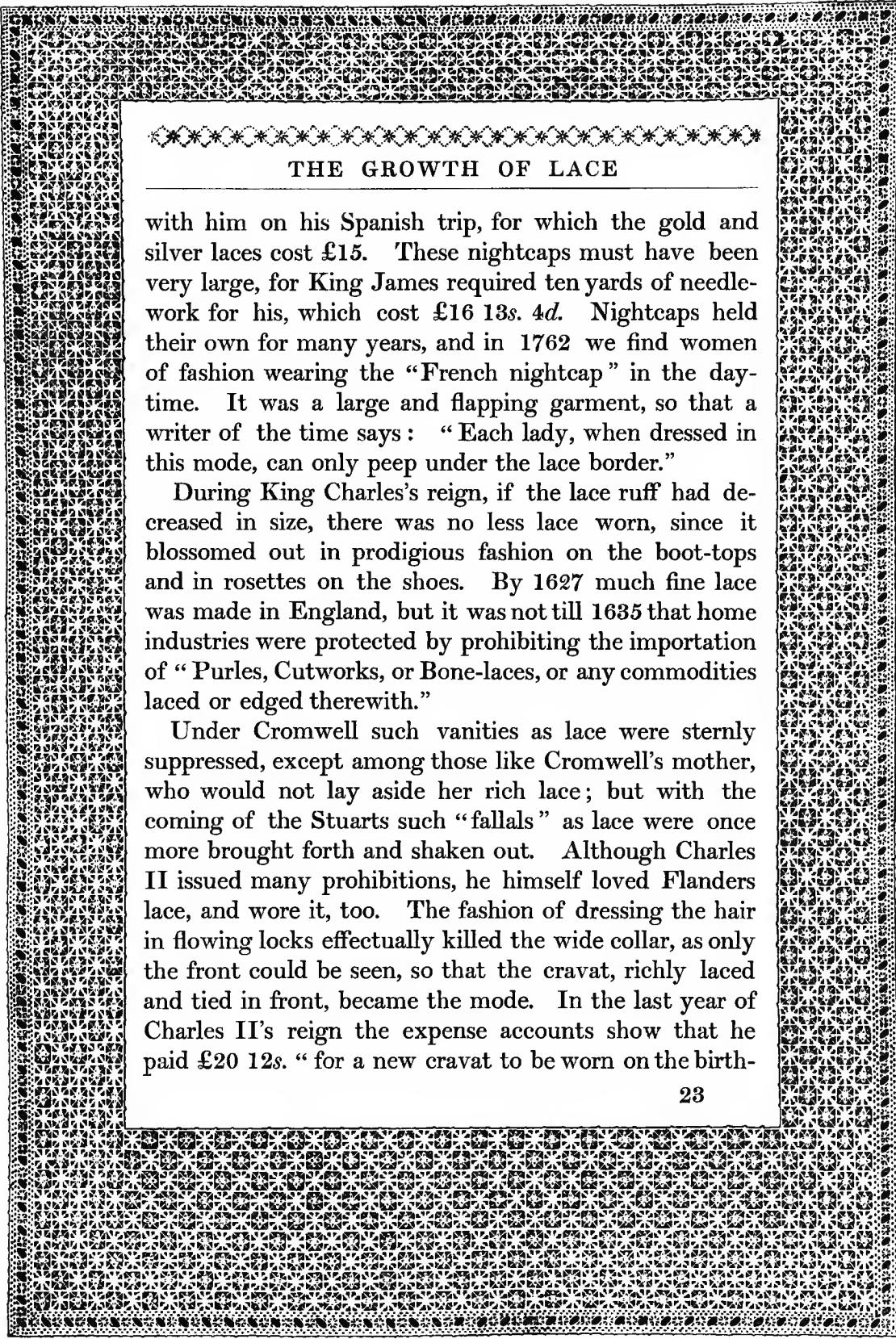
Even after the commencement of the Civil War, when Royalists were dubbed Cavaliers, and Republicans were called Roundheads, the costume still retained its elegance and beauty among the faction devoted to the Crown. The doublet of velvet, satin, or silk guarded with lace, had large, loose sleeves slashed up the front. The collar was covered by a falling band of richest Point lace, which, with its peculiar edging of points, became known as Vandyck's. The breeches met the long boots, which were wide, and fringed with either lace or lawn ruffles.

The female dress was equally elegant and varied. "Rhodon and Iris," a play first acted in May, 1631, gives the following catalogue of the ornaments of a lady of fashion :

"Chains, coronets, pendans, bracelets and earrings ;  
Pins, girdles, spangles, embroideries and rings ;  
Shadowes, rebatoes, ribbands, ruffs, cuffs, falls,  
Scarfes, feathers, fans, maskes, muffs, laces, cauls ;  
Thin tiffanies, cobweb lawn and fardingals,  
Sweet fals, vayles, wimples, glasses, crisping pins ;  
Pots of ointment, combes, with poking sticks and bodkines,  
Coyfes, gorgets, fringes, rowles, fillets and hair laces,  
Silks, damasks, velvets, tinsels, cloth of gold,  
Of tissues with colours of a hundred fold."

The varieties of falling bands are "French falls," "Geneva bands," which were worn by the clergy, and the narrow falls worn by the Roundheads.

Nightcaps, which had appeared in King Henry VIII's time, had by 1626 become valuable adjuncts to both men's and women's attire. Prince Charles carried two



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## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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with him on his Spanish trip, for which the gold and silver laces cost £15. These nightcaps must have been very large, for King James required ten yards of needle-work for his, which cost £16 13s. 4d. Nightcaps held their own for many years, and in 1762 we find women of fashion wearing the "French nightcap" in the day-time. It was a large and flapping garment, so that a writer of the time says: "Each lady, when dressed in this mode, can only peep under the lace border."

During King Charles's reign, if the lace ruff had decreased in size, there was no less lace worn, since it blossomed out in prodigious fashion on the boot-tops and in rosettes on the shoes. By 1627 much fine lace was made in England, but it was not till 1635 that home industries were protected by prohibiting the importation of "Purles, Cutworks, or Bone-laces, or any commodities laced or edged therewith."

Under Cromwell such vanities as lace were sternly suppressed, except among those like Cromwell's mother, who would not lay aside her rich lace; but with the coming of the Stuarts such "fallals" as lace were once more brought forth and shaken out. Although Charles II issued many prohibitions, he himself loved Flanders lace, and wore it, too. The fashion of dressing the hair in flowing locks effectually killed the wide collar, as only the front could be seen, so that the cravat, richly laced and tied in front, became the mode. In the last year of Charles II's reign the expense accounts show that he paid £20 12s. "for a new cravat to be worn on the birth-

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THE LACE BOOK

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day of his dear brother." Pepys wore one of these bands to church on October 19, 1662. He was so pleased with his appearance that he notes down: "So neat it is that I am resolved my great expence shall be lace-bands." Pepys speaks many times of the lace on his and his wife's clothes, of gold lace, lace bands, lace petticoats, garments guarded with lace; and finally, when his brother goes to Holland to seek his fortune, Pepys, in a burst of generosity, gives him an old coat trimmed with lace from off one of his wife's petticoats!

Lace cravats were popular for many years, and were only beginning to be superseded in 1735. James II wore, on his coronation, a Venice Point lace cravat and ruffles, and the cravat cost £36 10s.

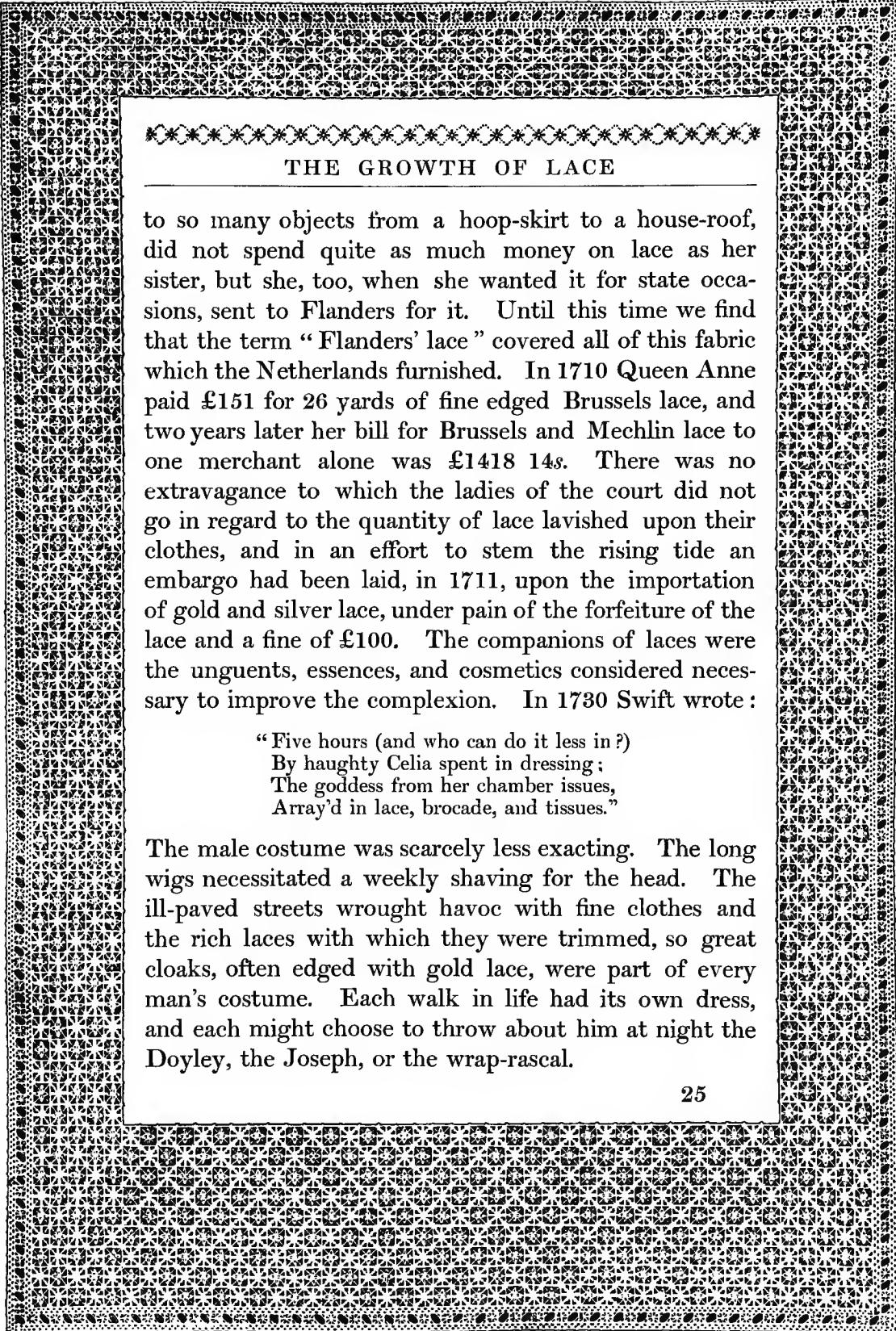
William III and Mary did not hesitate to have much and costly lace, both of Italian and of Flanders make, and the expense accounts duly set forth the fact. In one instance six Point lace cravats for William cost £158, and it is in this reign that the extravagance in lace reached its height, everything being trimmed with it, even such homely articles as combing-cloths, "toy-lights," pillow-beres, night shifts, razor-cloths, etc. If the Queen pays £17 for a lace apron, the King exceeds her by giving £499 10s. for the lace to trim his new nightshirts. Nor were simple gentlemen far behind royalty, for in 1709 Mr. Gore's wedding shirts are described as "laste with lace of eight pound a yard, the nightshirt lace three pound ten a yard."

"Good Queen Anne," whose name has been attached



PLATE VII.—*The Gonfaloniere Peretti. Ruff and breeches of cut-work. Portrait by Domenichino (1581-1641).*





## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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to so many objects from a hoop-skirt to a house-roof, did not spend quite as much money on lace as her sister, but she, too, when she wanted it for state occasions, sent to Flanders for it. Until this time we find that the term "Flanders' lace" covered all of this fabric which the Netherlands furnished. In 1710 Queen Anne paid £151 for 26 yards of fine edged Brussels lace, and two years later her bill for Brussels and Mechlin lace to one merchant alone was £1418 14s. There was no extravagance to which the ladies of the court did not go in regard to the quantity of lace lavished upon their clothes, and in an effort to stem the rising tide an embargo had been laid, in 1711, upon the importation of gold and silver lace, under pain of the forfeiture of the lace and a fine of £100. The companions of laces were the unguents, essences, and cosmetics considered necessary to improve the complexion. In 1730 Swift wrote :

"Five hours (and who can do it less in ?)  
By haughty Celia spent in dressing ;  
The goddess from her chamber issues,  
Array'd in lace, brocade, and tissues."

The male costume was scarcely less exacting. The long wigs necessitated a weekly shaving for the head. The ill-paved streets wrought havoc with fine clothes and the rich laces with which they were trimmed, so great cloaks, often edged with gold lace, were part of every man's costume. Each walk in life had its own dress, and each might choose to throw about him at night the Doyley, the Joseph, or the wrap-rascal.

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THE LACE BOOK

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Year after year the "Great Wardrobe Accounts" teem with exorbitant sums paid for lace. During the reigns of the first two Georges we read of lappets and flounces, caps, aprons, stomachers, and handkerchiefs, and the second George was quite a martinet as to the quality of his lace and the profusion with which it was to be worn. To please him, and in deference to the prevailing English fashions, when Queen Caroline first appeared in England she wore the dress most in vogue among English ladies. She had on a gold brocade with a white ground, had a stomacher ornamented with diamonds, and a fly cap with richly laced lappets. During his reign English laces began to be held in greater estimation and more worn on high occasions, and edicts were passed prohibiting foreign importations.

By 1760, with George III on the throne, much less lace was used in masculine attire, and the rich lace which had been in daily use was laid aside, appearing only on great occasions.

Early in the nineteenth century collections of old lace began to be made by women of fashion, and Sydney, Lady Morgan, gathered much in her travels. In 1818, at Paris, she writes to her sister :

"I have had to set myself up an evening dress, and though materials are extraordinary cheap here, work is wonderfully dear, so dear that I cannot get a plain dress made up under a guinea and a half. However I have made myself a very pretty dress with my own two hands, white satin with a deep lace flounce. With the skirt I got on beautifully, but as to the corsage, fortunately there is scarcely any, what there is being covered with falls, and frills of lace, so it does not signify how the body is made."



## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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From the cradle to the grave there was no place or occasion where lace was not worn in profusion, the only limit being the ability of the wearer to gain possession of it. The once beautiful Aurora von Königsmarck, whose form has become the colour and consistency of leather, lies in her coffin completely enveloped in folds of costly lace. She left directions that no expense should be spared to purchase Point d'Angleterre, Malines, or Guipure for the last adornment of her body, and the jewels which were also coffined with her are worth a fortune. Many people were anxious about the way they should be dressed for the grave, and left particular instructions in regard to the matter. The Duc de Luynes writes in his Memoirs:

“The Curé of Saint Sulpice related to me the fashion in which the Duke of Alva (who died in Paris in 1739) was by his own will interred. A shirt of the finest Holland trimmed with new point lace; a new coat of Vardez cloth embroidered in silver; a new wig; his cane in the right, his sword in the left of his coffin.”

At christenings lace was always abundantly used. In 1778 the infant daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Chandos was so weighed down by the immense amount of lace on her robes that she fainted. George III and Queen Charlotte stood as sponsors, and although the child’s mother observed her condition she said nothing, so that the dignity of the christening, with Majesty in attendance, should not be disturbed. As the Archbishop of Canterbury gave the child back to its mother he remarked that it was the quietest child he ever held.

## THE LACE BOOK

It died soon after, having never recovered from the effects of its christening.

It was much the fashion for great dames to receive company upon their "uprising" a few days before the christening. Lady Chesterfield, in 1802, received the Queen and George III "reclining on a state bed, dressed in white satin with a profusion of lace, the counterpane of white satin embroidered with gold, and the bed of crimson satin lined with white."

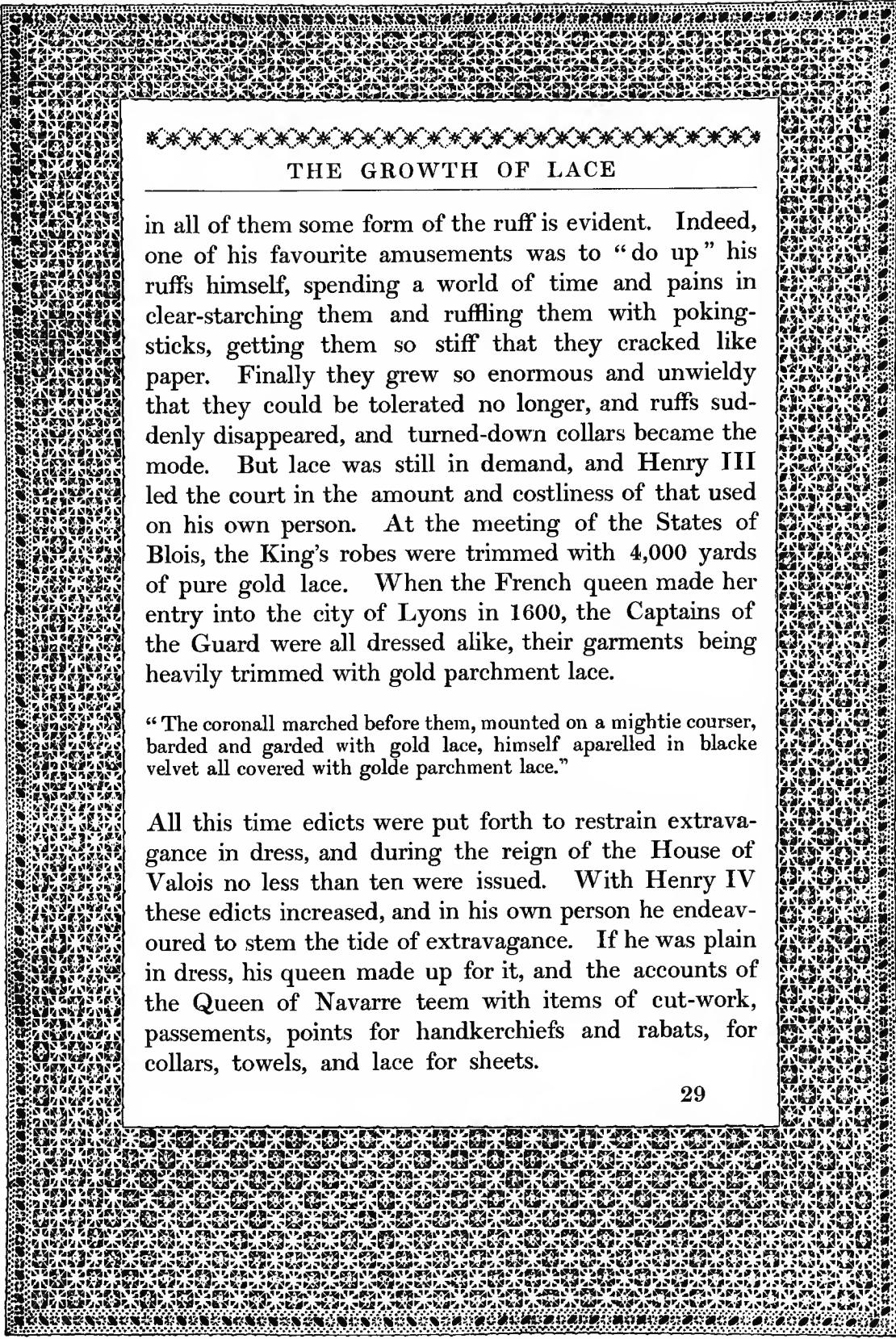
England, in her love of lace and extravagant use of it, had but followed in the path worn by her Continental neighbours. France desired to be no less brave than the rest of the world, and the sums of money she expended were even greater than those of England.

It was the arrival of Catherine de Medici in France that disseminated the taste for lace through all classes, together with other luxuries that had their origin in Italy. It is true that it was at first the more primitive forms of lace which she brought with her, but, with the development of lace in Italy, France followed suit, and it was in full favour by 1550. The effeminate Valois, dissolute and extravagant, gave themselves up to every species of folly. Their dress was as costly and brilliant as could be devised, and the last of this family, Henry III, paid so much attention to the preservation of his beauty and the details of his costume that he was well called the *homme-femme* of the Louvre. There are many portraits of him,—with his dogs ; receiving Guise ; at Blois ; instituting the order of the “Holy Spirit ;” and at balls.—and



**PLATE VIII.**—Faustina, wife of Count John of Nassau. Ruff of lawn, triple-plaited, edged with fine Gothic Point. Portrait by Raves-teyn (1572-1657).





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## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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in all of them some form of the ruff is evident. Indeed, one of his favourite amusements was to "do up" his ruffs himself, spending a world of time and pains in clear-starching them and ruffling them with poking-sticks, getting them so stiff that they cracked like paper. Finally they grew so enormous and unwieldy that they could be tolerated no longer, and ruffs suddenly disappeared, and turned-down collars became the mode. But lace was still in demand, and Henry III led the court in the amount and costliness of that used on his own person. At the meeting of the States of Blois, the King's robes were trimmed with 4,000 yards of pure gold lace. When the French queen made her entry into the city of Lyons in 1600, the Captains of the Guard were all dressed alike, their garments being heavily trimmed with gold parchment lace.

"The coronall marched before them, mounted on a mightie courser, barded and garded with gold lace, himself aparelled in blacke velvet all covered with golde parchment lace."

All this time edicts were put forth to restrain extravagance in dress, and during the reign of the House of Valois no less than ten were issued. With Henry IV these edicts increased, and in his own person he endeavoured to stem the tide of extravagance. If he was plain in dress, his queen made up for it, and the accounts of the Queen of Navarre teem with items of cut-work, passements, points for handkerchiefs and rabats, for collars, towels, and lace for sheets.

THE LACE BOOK

The inventory of Gabrielle, Duchess of Beaufort, 1599, mentions handkerchiefs worked with gold, silver, and silk ; cuffs of cut-work, enriched with silver ; handkerchiefs of cut-work enriched with gold and silver ; and much linen also cut and worked. The sumptuous elegance of Marie de Medici's costume has been amply portrayed by Rubens, and her laces and jewels were the finest to be had anywhere. Yet the time came when she was obliged to curtail her expenditure, owing to the clamour of her subjects, and in 1613 she, too, issued an edict prohibiting the use of lace and embroidery. For some years previous to this the court had been using quantities of the richest Point from both Venice and Flanders. Much lace had been made in France, however, and many pattern-books published there, the first by Vinciolo, the Venetian, in 1587. He was commissioned by the King to print these books, and they were so much in demand that there were many editions, and *grande dames* made lace as did the great Italian ladies, for themselves, and also rarely for the Church.

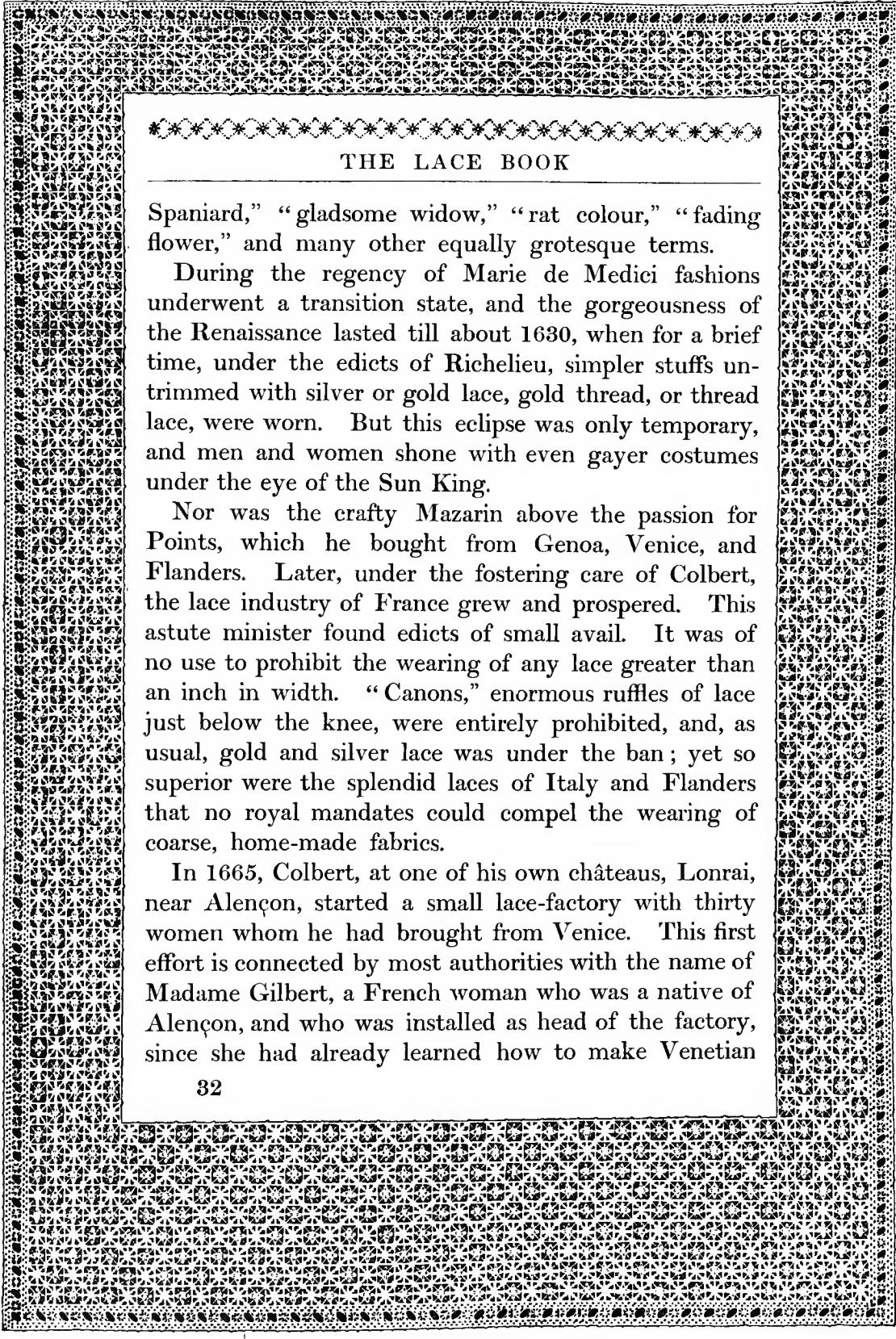
Boots, garters, aprons, cuffs, and falling bands were all garnished with lace, and though edicts were showered upon the use of it, the portraits of the time show that it was still the finishing touch to the toilette of beauty or of cavalier. That gallant boy, Cinq-Mars, Master of the Wardrobe to the fickle Louis XIII, is always remembered by his 300 sets of lace ruffles. He was only twenty-two when he went to the block in 1642, his suit of "dark-coloured Holland cloth covered with gold

## THE GROWTH OF LACE

lace, and a scarlet mantle with silver buttons," setting off his handsome person, and befitting the way he met his untimely end.

By 1634 boots and carriages, it is decreed, must show no lace. In 1636 a fine of 6,000 francs, banishment for five years, and confiscation, was the penalty for wearing home-made laces as well as foreign. Yet Marie de Medici still imported and wore gold, silver, and thread laces from Italy and Flanders. The waists of the gowns, stiffened to an extent that made them instruments of torture, were cut out so liberally in the neck that the Pope at last interfered and threatened excommunication to those who persisted in baring their necks in this style. But this had little effect, and the superb upstanding ruffs of lace, stiffened and borne on wire frames, set off the painted faces of their wearers in a most sumptuous frame, enhancing the whiteness of the shoulders from which it rose, and adding another lustre to the brilliancy of the jewels that were crowded on neck, corsage, and hair. On one gown alone the queen had sewn 32,000 pearls and 3,000 diamonds, in addition to many yards of gold lace, and the finest Venetian Point for ruff and cuffs.

Nor was the use of lace confined to the outer garments only. A dame correctly dressed wore three skirts of different colours, all guarded or trimmed with lace, for each skirt was expected to show, and the fashionable colours for these petticoats were called by such whimsical names as "dying monkey," "sick



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## THE LACE BOOK

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Spaniard," "gladsome widow," "rat colour," "fading flower," and many other equally grotesque terms.

During the regency of Marie de Medici fashions underwent a transition state, and the gorgeousness of the Renaissance lasted till about 1630, when for a brief time, under the edicts of Richelieu, simpler stuffs untrimmed with silver or gold lace, gold thread, or thread lace, were worn. But this eclipse was only temporary, and men and women shone with even gayer costumes under the eye of the Sun King.

Nor was the crafty Mazarin above the passion for Points, which he bought from Genoa, Venice, and Flanders. Later, under the fostering care of Colbert, the lace industry of France grew and prospered. This astute minister found edicts of small avail. It was of no use to prohibit the wearing of any lace greater than an inch in width. "Canons," enormous ruffles of lace just below the knee, were entirely prohibited, and, as usual, gold and silver lace was under the ban; yet so superior were the splendid laces of Italy and Flanders that no royal mandates could compel the wearing of coarse, home-made fabrics.

In 1665, Colbert, at one of his own châteaus, Lonrai, near Alençon, started a small lace-factory with thirty women whom he had brought from Venice. This first effort is connected by most authorities with the name of Madame Gilbert, a French woman who was a native of Alençon, and who was installed as head of the factory, since she had already learned how to make Venetian



**PLATE IX.**—Bossuet (1627-1704). He wears  
an alb trimmed with Point de France.  
Portrait by Rigaud.



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THE GROWTH OF LACE

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Point. Fine lace was produced here, and soon in other places in France. It was originally called "Point de France." Later, specific names were chosen; and encouraged by Colbert, and fostered by the edict of Louis XIV, who forbade the use of any other kind of lace in his immediate court circle, Alençon lace grew to great perfection and beauty, and many people were at work upon it. Drastic measures were used to see that the edicts relative to the wearing of French lace only were carried out. In 1670 the hangman publicly burned "one hundred thousand crowns' worth of Point de Venise, Flanders lace, and other foreign commodities that are forbid."

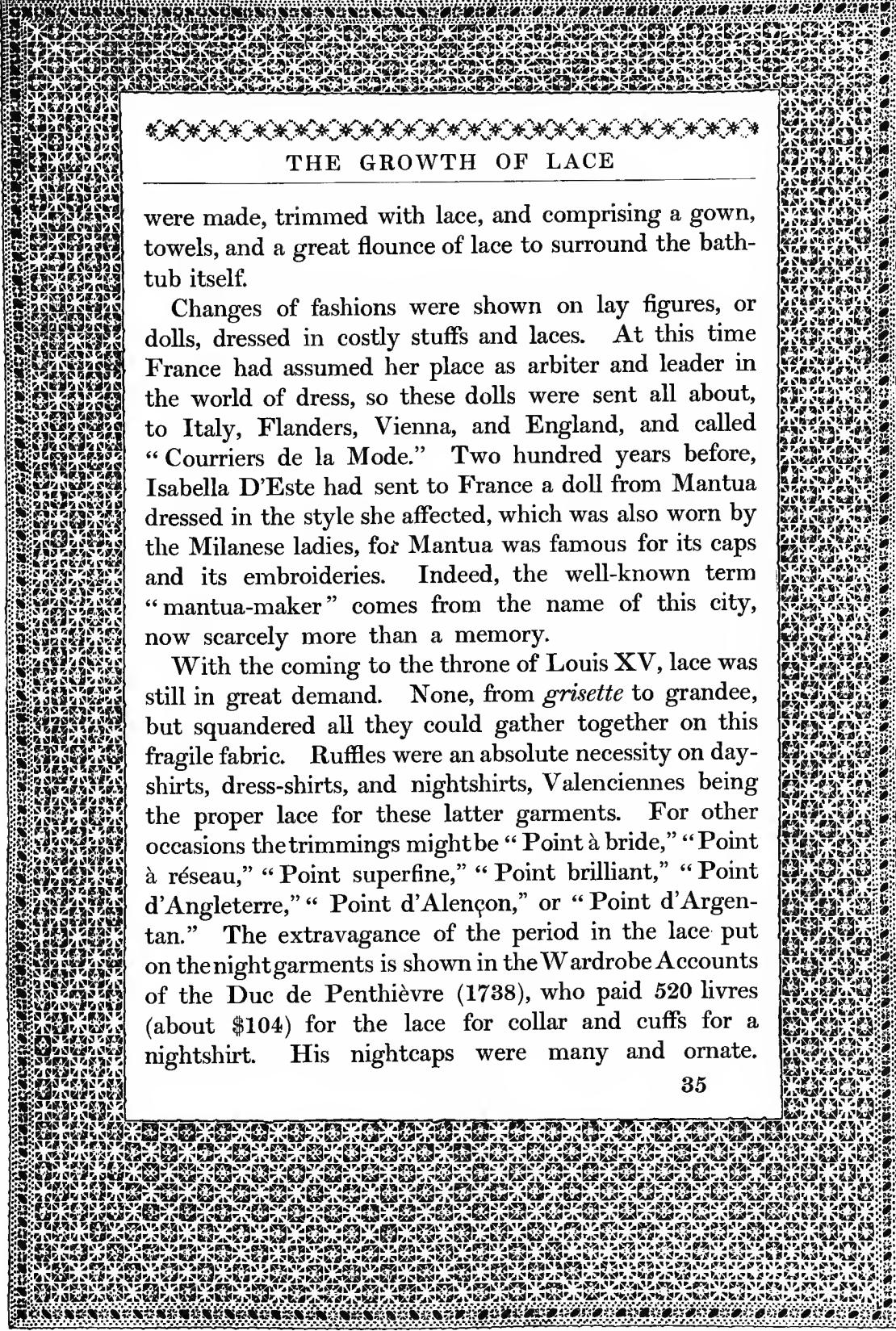
At the frequent balls and masques which were the diversion of the French court, the outlay for lace was immense. Louise de Querouaille had a man's dress made to wear at a ball in 1672. The bill shows it to have been a very rich court suit:

"For making a dove-coloured and silk brocade coat, Rhingrave breeches and canons, the coat lined with white lutestring and interlined with camblett; the breeches lined with lutestring; seamed all over with a scarlet and silver lace; sleeves and canons whipt and laced with a scarlet and silver lace and a point lace trimmed with a scarlet figured and plain sattin ribbon and scarlet and silver twist . . . . .	£ 2
"Buttons . . . . .	1
"10 yds. brocade at 28s. . . . .	14
"Linings and ribbons . . . . .	20
"22 yds. of lace at 18s. . . . .	19 16
"Beaver hat . . . . .	2 10
	<hr/>
	" £59 6 "

## THE LACE BOOK

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By 1680 it was publicly stated that the laces commonly called Point de Venise were made in France as well as in Italy, while in 1687 the Earl of Manchester, writing from Venice, complains of the excessive price of the Point made there, and says he is sure it can be bought as cheap and in better patterns in England or Paris. Never was dress more extravagant. Since the ponderous richness of the fashions of the Renaissance had been thrown off, it was lighter and more graceful. Beauties and *élégantes* of both sexes gave their minds to this absorbing subject. She who could invent a new use for a bit of lace, and he who could contrive something *bizarre* in the cock of a bonnet, were sure of the plaudits of their friends and the satisfaction of having their ideas promptly copied. There were such fantastic trifles as "galants," "ladders," "fanfreluches," "transparents," "furbelows," "hurly-burlies," "what-nots," "Steinkirks," "Fontanges," "engageants," "roses," and "palatines," — all requiring more or less rich and beautiful lace in their composition. The skirts of the gowns were looped aside to show an under-petticoat quite as rich as the gown itself, and frequently smothered in lace in the form of whole fronts which hung from the waist, or two or three smaller flounces. The sides of the outer skirt were trimmed with lace set on in full shell-like ruches, or in "ladders," and only the purse of the wearer, or her credit with the lace merchants, limited the amount put on these sumptuous gowns. Lest, even with all this elegance of attire, life should not be sumptuous enough, "bath sets"



THE GROWTH OF LACE

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were made, trimmed with lace, and comprising a gown, towels, and a great flounce of lace to surround the bath-tub itself.

Changes of fashions were shown on lay figures, or dolls, dressed in costly stuffs and laces. At this time France had assumed her place as arbiter and leader in the world of dress, so these dolls were sent all about, to Italy, Flanders, Vienna, and England, and called "Courriers de la Mode." Two hundred years before, Isabella D'Este had sent to France a doll from Mantua dressed in the style she affected, which was also worn by the Milanese ladies, for Mantua was famous for its caps and its embroideries. Indeed, the well-known term "mantua-maker" comes from the name of this city, now scarcely more than a memory.

With the coming to the throne of Louis XV, lace was still in great demand. None, from *grisette* to grandee, but squandered all they could gather together on this fragile fabric. Ruffles were an absolute necessity on day-shirts, dress-shirts, and nightshirts, Valenciennes being the proper lace for these latter garments. For other occasions the trimmings might be "Point à bride," "Point à réseau," "Point superfine," "Point brilliant," "Point d'Angleterre," "Point d'Alençon," or "Point d'Argentan." The extravagance of the period in the lace put on the nightgarments is shown in the Wardrobe Accounts of the Duc de Penthièvre (1738), who paid 520 livres (about \$104) for the lace for collar and cuffs for a nightshirt. His nightcaps were many and ornate.

## THE LACE BOOK

They cost from 27 livres (\$5.40) to 253 livres (\$50.60) each.

By 1730 the fardingale, which under the austere frostiness of Madame de Maintenon's reign had suffered eclipse, regained its old-time proportions. This led to a change in the fashion of gowns, and once more yards upon yards of lace were needed for their embellishment. The thick and heavy stuffs worn in the preceding reign were rejected for gauzes and transparent materials, trimmed with fluttering lace, which was seen on every article of attire from slippers to fans. It was during this reign (that of Louis XV) that in the fancy of the great dames special makes of lace were relegated to special seasons, Argentan and Alençon being called "winter laces," and their use being somewhat superseded by Malines and Point d'Angleterre.

In Mrs. Palliser's "History of Lace" is given some items from the Wardrobe Account of Madame Du Barry, showing the amount of Point d'Angleterre she considered necessary:

"One complete toilette of Point d'Angleterre, 8,823 livres [about \$1764.60].

"A head-dress composed of two barbes, six pairs of cuffs, and a jabot, all of finest Point d'Angleterre, 7,000 livres [\$1,400].

“Trimming for peignoir, of Point d'Angleterre, 2,343 livres  
[\$468.60].

"Trimming for a fichu, of Point d'Angleterre, 388 livres"  
[\$77.60].

—and so on, while her bills for other laces, Alençon and Argentan, even as late as 1773, teem with borders,



**P**LATE X.—*Marie-Pauline Bonaparte, Princesse Borghese (1780-1825).* Empire robe trimmed with black Guipure. Ruff of gold lace, wired. *Portrait by Mme Benoit.*



## THE GROWTH OF LACE

flounces, and festoons. Even a pair of *sabots* was trimmed with two ruffles of Blonde Tulle bordered with Alençon !

With the coming to the throne of Marie Antoinette, wearied with the formality and etiquette of the old *régime*, the court, when not on dress parade, laid aside formal fashions, and frivelled in India muslin and straw hats. There was not much lace worn, except Blonde, which made frills at the sleeves and about the corsage, and much of the eccentricity which crops out in every court found expression in the hair-dressing, which assumed such gross and ridiculous proportions that books and newspapers are filled with sarcastic remarks on the subject. Many little details of dress originated by the Queen were called by her name, like the fichus trimmed with lace and tied behind, which we now call "Marie Antoinettes." They were originally called "Archiduchesses," and were made from both Tulle and Marli, as well as from muslin. At the Petit Trianon the ladies worked at lace-making and embroidery as well as at farming, and flounces of Marli lace were embroidered, or at any rate commenced, and served as pretty trifles to show off white hands. Even the men worked at such things as lace work, and carried about with them little bags, called in derision "ridicules," which were furnished with sewing-implements all of gold, and often jewelled.

When a court lady reached her fortieth year she wore a coif of black lace and tied it under her chin. By 1789

THE LACE BOOK

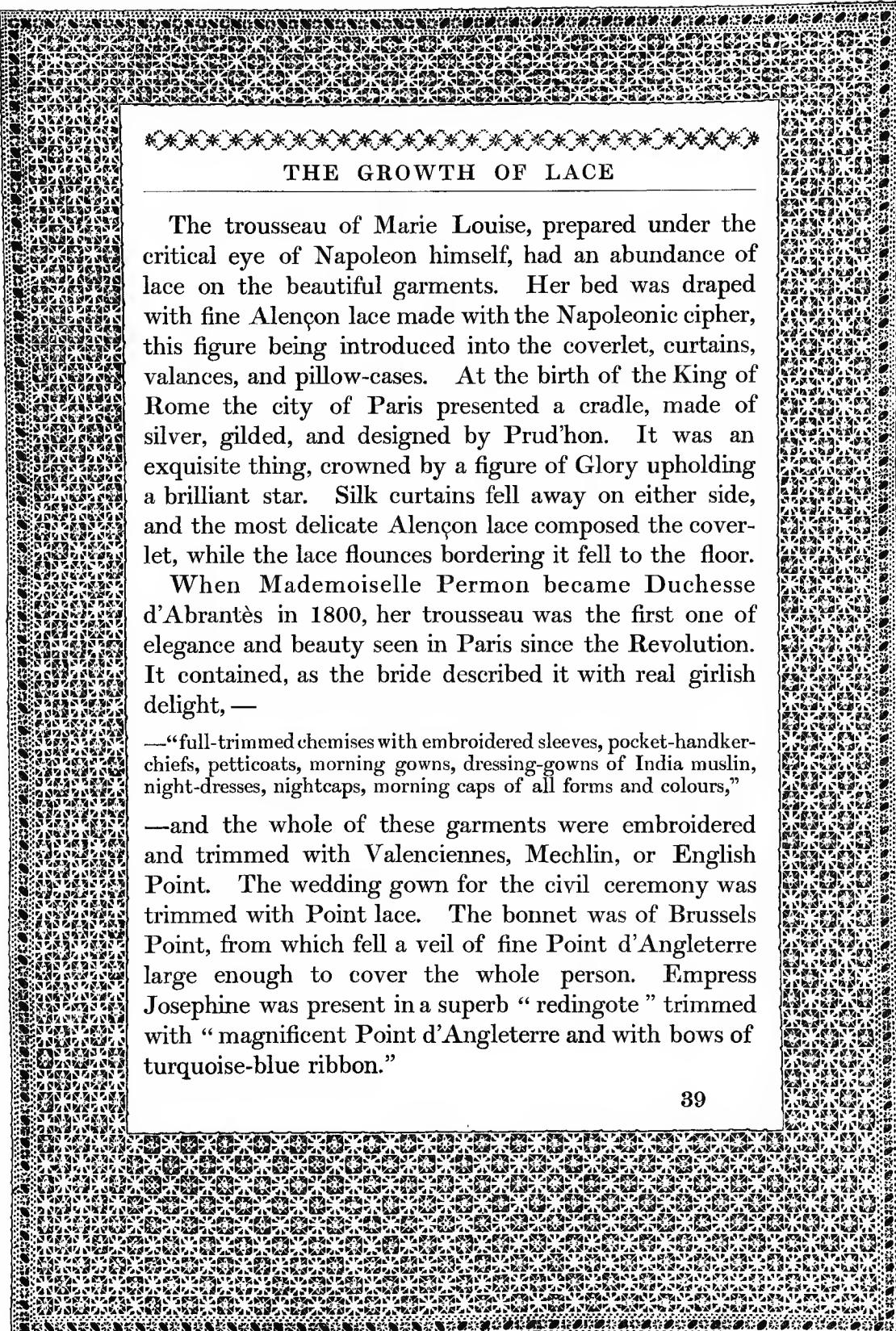
only old ladies wore caps “à la Pierrot,” trimmed with quantities of lace.

With the Revolution died, at least in France, the manufacture and use of lace, to be revived for a brief period under Napoleon, who appreciated the effect of luxury of attire, and during the early years of his reign lace once more was imperial. Alençon, Brussels, and Chantilly laces were the favourite fabrics of this monarch, who made time even to attend to the small details of the costumes of his family and court. To encourage home manufactures, and commerce as well, Napoleon ordered Josephine not only to entertain extensively, but also to devote much attention to dress. The Empress, who was as fond of dress and gewgaws as a child, was only too glad to devise new and extravagant costumes, and spent over 1,000,000 francs a year on her clothes, and even then was constantly in debt. In the year 1802-03 she ordered 200 white muslin dresses, embroidered or trimmed with lace, costing from 500 to 2,000 francs each. In the same year she had 558 pairs of white silk stockings, and 500 lace-trimmed chemises. In her whole wardrobe there were but two flannel petticoats, since the fit of the gowns was so close that even in winter a chemise and corset were the only garments possible to wear underneath them. At the coronation Josephine wore a gown of silver tissue embroidered with gold, and around her white neck a ruff or *fraise* of exquisite lace heavily wired and studded with jewels.



**P**LATE XI.—Empress Eugenie. White and black silk Blonde lace. One length of this flounce three and one-half yards long, twenty inches wide, sold in London in 1903 for forty-five guineas. Portrait by Winterhalter.





## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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The trousseau of Marie Louise, prepared under the critical eye of Napoleon himself, had an abundance of lace on the beautiful garments. Her bed was draped with fine Alençon lace made with the Napoleonic cipher, this figure being introduced into the coverlet, curtains, valances, and pillow-cases. At the birth of the King of Rome the city of Paris presented a cradle, made of silver, gilded, and designed by Prud'hon. It was an exquisite thing, crowned by a figure of Glory upholding a brilliant star. Silk curtains fell away on either side, and the most delicate Alençon lace composed the coverlet, while the lace flounces bordering it fell to the floor.

When Mademoiselle Permon became Duchesse d'Abrantès in 1800, her trousseau was the first one of elegance and beauty seen in Paris since the Revolution. It contained, as the bride described it with real girlish delight,—

—“full-trimmed chemises with embroidered sleeves, pocket-handkerchiefs, petticoats, morning gowns, dressing-gowns of India muslin, night-dresses, nightcaps, morning caps of all forms and colours,”

—and the whole of these garments were embroidered and trimmed with Valenciennes, Mechlin, or English Point. The wedding gown for the civil ceremony was trimmed with Point lace. The bonnet was of Brussels Point, from which fell a veil of fine Point d'Angleterre large enough to cover the whole person. Empress Josephine was present in a superb “redingote” trimmed with “magnificent Point d'Angleterre and with bows of turquoise-blue ribbon.”

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THE LACE BOOK  
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In a letter from the Duchesse Edmée de Brancas, dated Paris, 1778, she says :

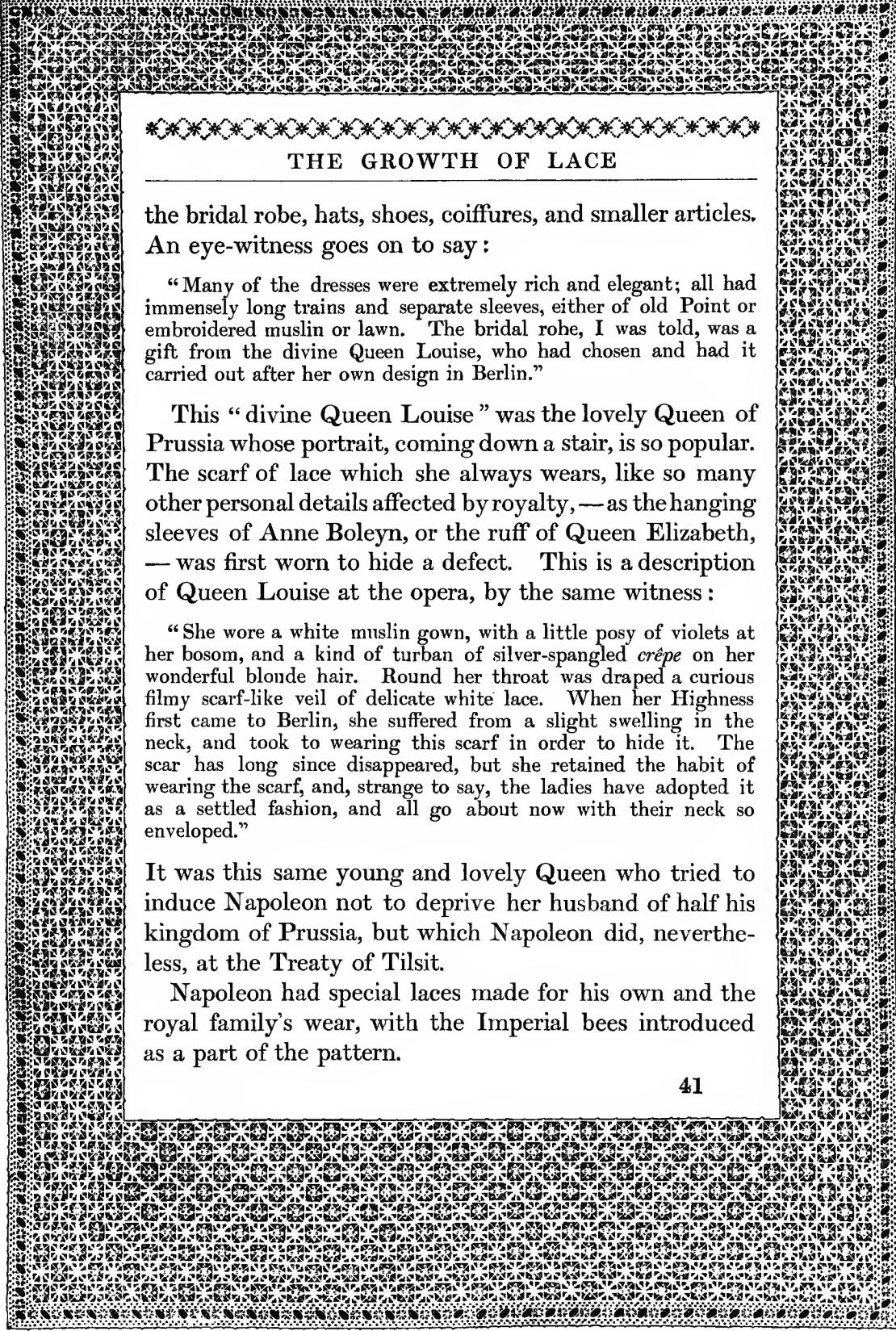
“The craze for the Neo-Greek costume which has been in favour ever since the Revolution demands that every line of the female form should be in evidence, and lays stress on much that were better concealed. To me it is quite disgusting.”

The colours affected were all called by fanciful names, a certain shade of brown being “terre d’Égypte,” while for ladies’ gowns such colours as “gorge de pigeon” were all the rage.

The Baroness de Courtot, a member of the old *régime*, who returned to Paris in 1800, wore on her presentation to Josephine a gown of *gorge de pigeon*, “with the waist up under the arms and a long train.” The dress was decorated with a *jabot* of Flemish lace fastened on the bosom with a diamond clasp.

Madame Tallien, who was noted for her extravagance, was the possessor of 365 head-dresses and bonnets, all more or less lace-trimmed, and 400 gowns, varying in value from 50 to 1,000 francs each. The appearance of the court was very gay and bright, since Napoleon abhorred dark colours and would not permit them to be worn before him.

About this same period (1801) there occurred in Cassel the wedding of the Duke of Meiningen with the Princess of Hesse. The trousseau was on view in one of the rooms of the palace. The dresses were displayed upon a long table in the middle of the room, and round about stood smaller tables on which lay the body linen,



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## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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the bridal robe, hats, shoes, coiffures, and smaller articles. An eye-witness goes on to say :

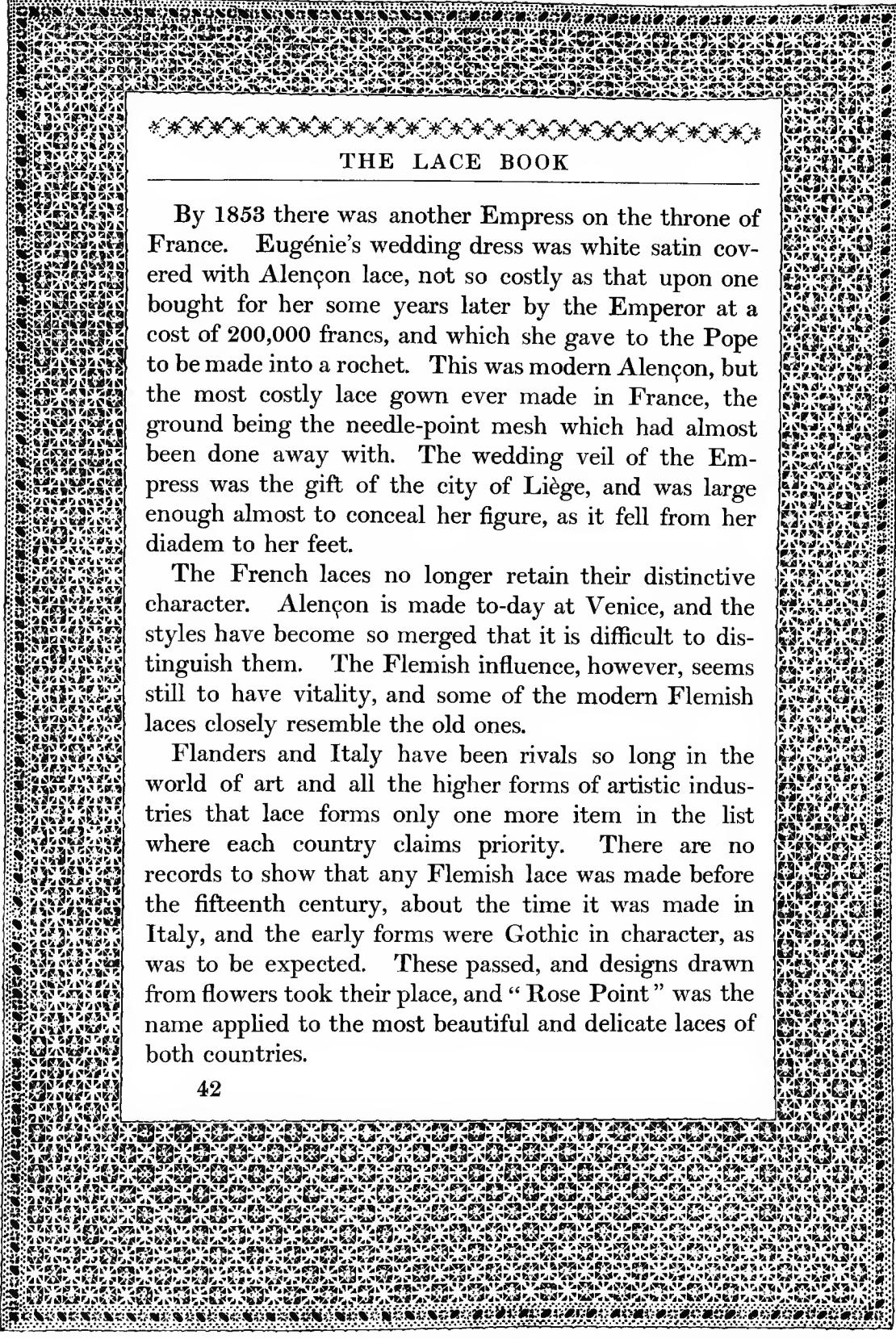
“ Many of the dresses were extremely rich and elegant; all had immensely long trains and separate sleeves, either of old Point or embroidered muslin or lawn. The bridal robe, I was told, was a gift from the divine Queen Louise, who had chosen and had it carried out after her own design in Berlin.”

This “ divine Queen Louise ” was the lovely Queen of Prussia whose portrait, coming down a stair, is so popular. The scarf of lace which she always wears, like so many other personal details affected by royalty,—as the hanging sleeves of Anne Boleyn, or the ruff of Queen Elizabeth,—was first worn to hide a defect. This is a description of Queen Louise at the opera, by the same witness :

“ She wore a white muslin gown, with a little posy of violets at her bosom, and a kind of turban of silver-spangled *crêpe* on her wonderful blonde hair. Round her throat was draped a curious filmy scarf-like veil of delicate white lace. When her Highness first came to Berlin, she suffered from a slight swelling in the neck, and took to wearing this scarf in order to hide it. The scarf has long since disappeared, but she retained the habit of wearing the scarf, and, strange to say, the ladies have adopted it as a settled fashion, and all go about now with their neck so enveloped.”

It was this same young and lovely Queen who tried to induce Napoleon not to deprive her husband of half his kingdom of Prussia, but which Napoleon did, nevertheless, at the Treaty of Tilsit.

Napoleon had special laces made for his own and the royal family’s wear, with the Imperial bees introduced as a part of the pattern.



THE LACE BOOK

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By 1853 there was another Empress on the throne of France. Eugénie's wedding dress was white satin covered with Alençon lace, not so costly as that upon one bought for her some years later by the Emperor at a cost of 200,000 francs, and which she gave to the Pope to be made into a rochet. This was modern Alençon, but the most costly lace gown ever made in France, the ground being the needle-point mesh which had almost been done away with. The wedding veil of the Empress was the gift of the city of Liège, and was large enough almost to conceal her figure, as it fell from her diadem to her feet.

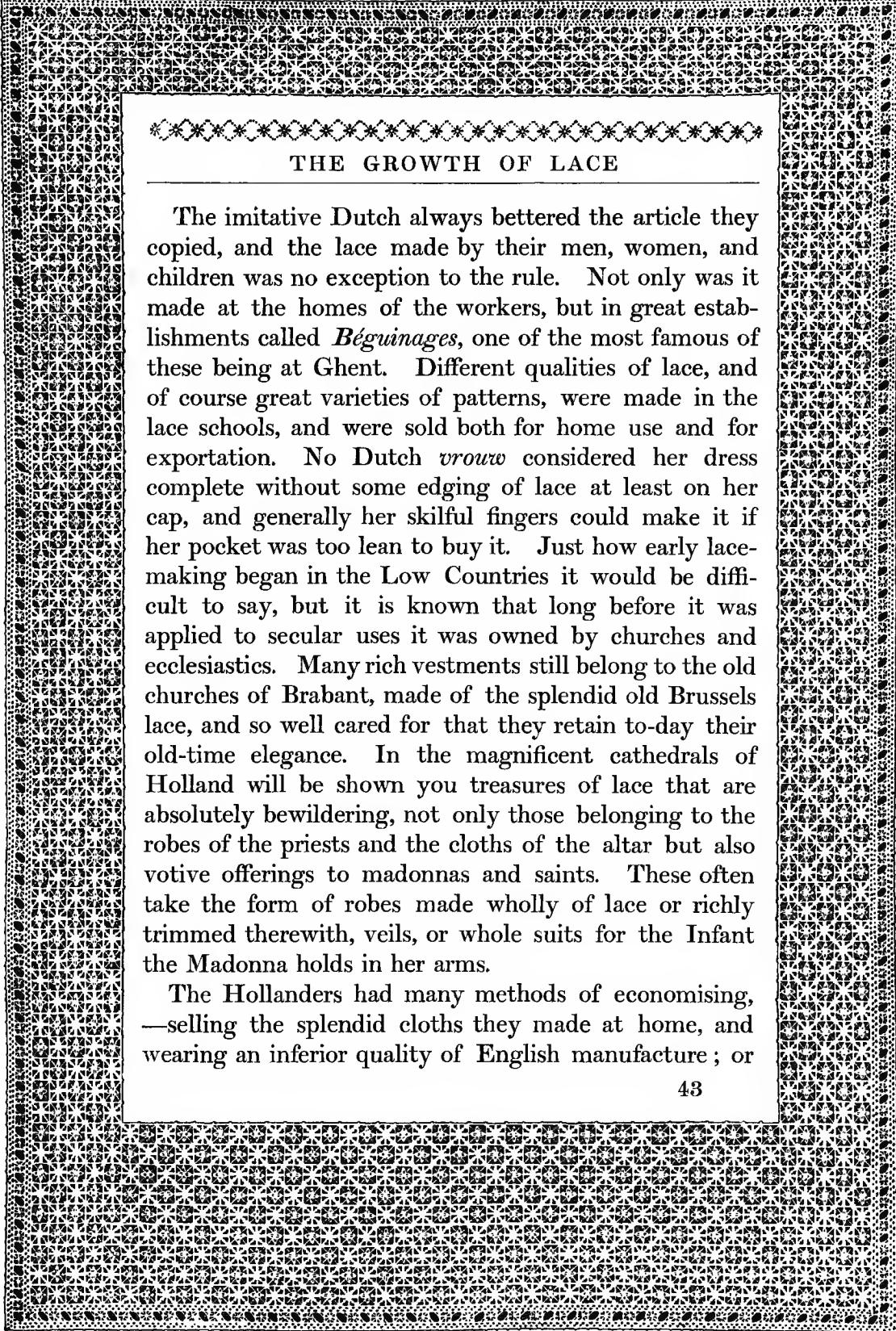
The French laces no longer retain their distinctive character. Alençon is made to-day at Venice, and the styles have become so merged that it is difficult to distinguish them. The Flemish influence, however, seems still to have vitality, and some of the modern Flemish laces closely resemble the old ones.

Flanders and Italy have been rivals so long in the world of art and all the higher forms of artistic industries that lace forms only one more item in the list where each country claims priority. There are no records to show that any Flemish lace was made before the fifteenth century, about the time it was made in Italy, and the early forms were Gothic in character, as was to be expected. These passed, and designs drawn from flowers took their place, and "Rose Point" was the name applied to the most beautiful and delicate laces of both countries.



**P**LATE XII.—*Cornelias de Graef. Collar, band strings, and edging of cuffs Point de Flandre. Cloak and doublet edged with black Guipure, garters and roses on shoes of this same lace. Portrait by Nicholas Elias.*





## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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The imitative Dutch always bettered the article they copied, and the lace made by their men, women, and children was no exception to the rule. Not only was it made at the homes of the workers, but in great establishments called *Béguinages*, one of the most famous of these being at Ghent. Different qualities of lace, and of course great varieties of patterns, were made in the lace schools, and were sold both for home use and for exportation. No Dutch *vrouw* considered her dress complete without some edging of lace at least on her cap, and generally her skilful fingers could make it if her pocket was too lean to buy it. Just how early lace-making began in the Low Countries it would be difficult to say, but it is known that long before it was applied to secular uses it was owned by churches and ecclesiastics. Many rich vestments still belong to the old churches of Brabant, made of the splendid old Brussels lace, and so well cared for that they retain to-day their old-time elegance. In the magnificent cathedrals of Holland will be shown you treasures of lace that are absolutely bewildering, not only those belonging to the robes of the priests and the cloths of the altar but also votive offerings to madonnas and saints. These often take the form of robes made wholly of lace or richly trimmed therewith, veils, or whole suits for the Infant the Madonna holds in her arms.

The Hollanders had many methods of economising, —selling the splendid cloths they made at home, and wearing an inferior quality of English manufacture; or

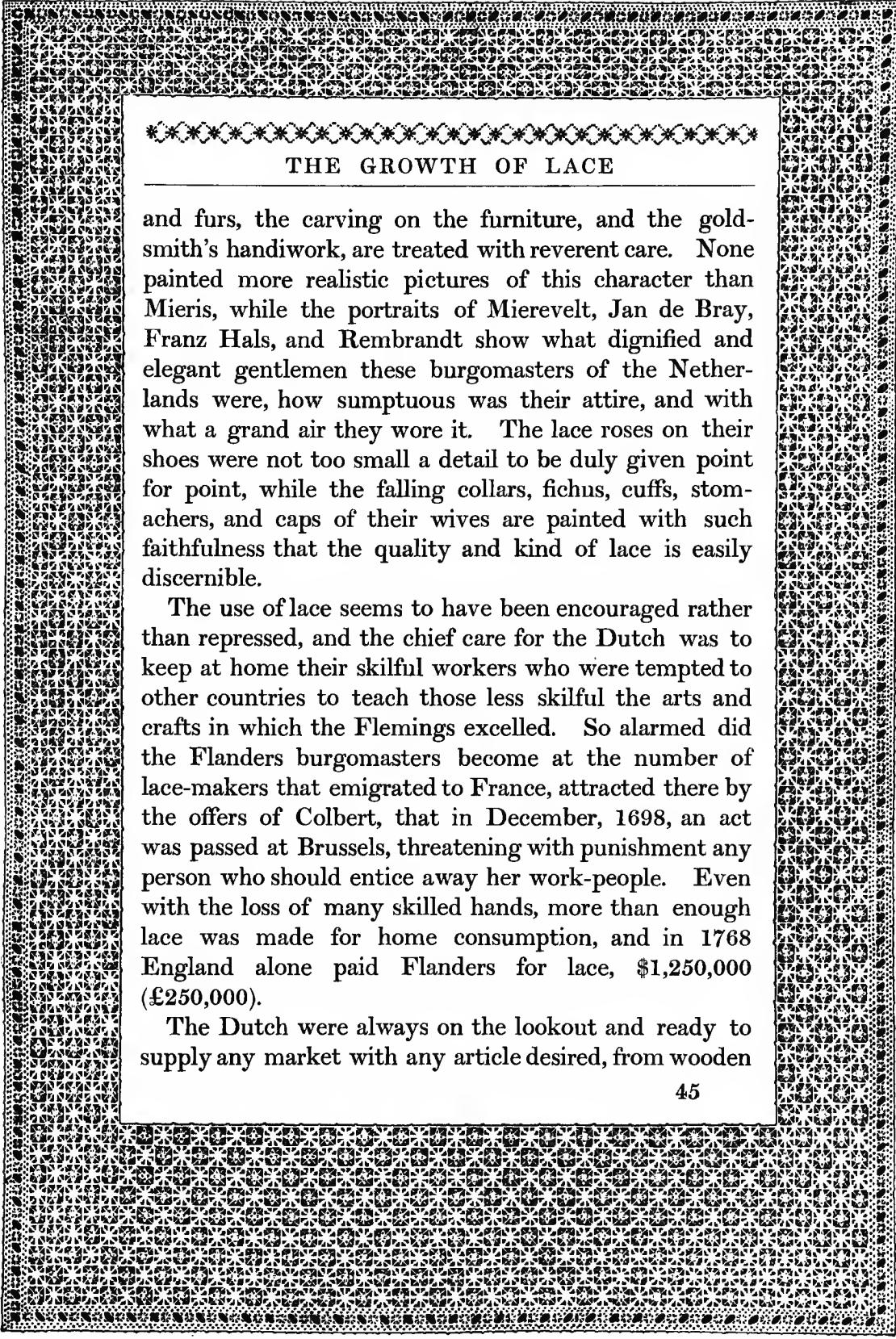
THE LACE BOOK

exporting their own rich, sweet butter and using a less admirable article purchased in the countries of northern Europe. They sold their lace, too,—thousands of yards yearly ; it remained their staple of commerce when the country was ravished by wars, distracted by troubles at home, or devastated by the plague. Yet we never find any record of lace being exported to that—

— “ country that draws fifty feet of water,  
In which men live as in the hold of nature,  
And when the sea does in them break  
And drowns a province, does but spring a leak.”

They might go without lace, but, when they wore it, it was that made of choicest flax, and at home. Countless portraits bear out this statement, as well as testifying to the fondness these burghers had for rich raiment and twisted chains of fine gold made in Venice, which city, in the centuries of the Renaissance, led the world in goldsmith’s work. They copied, it is true, the laces of Venice, but this was only till they learned the intricacies of needle point. After that they were quite able to stand alone.

The Dutch artists of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries painted charming genre pictures of life among the simple as well as among the great. Card parties, music parties, a lady sewing or reading in her room, flowed from their brushes with prodigal abundance. In all these pictures the least minutiae of dress, adornment, household belongings, and customs of the period and country are observed. The satin and lace, the broderies



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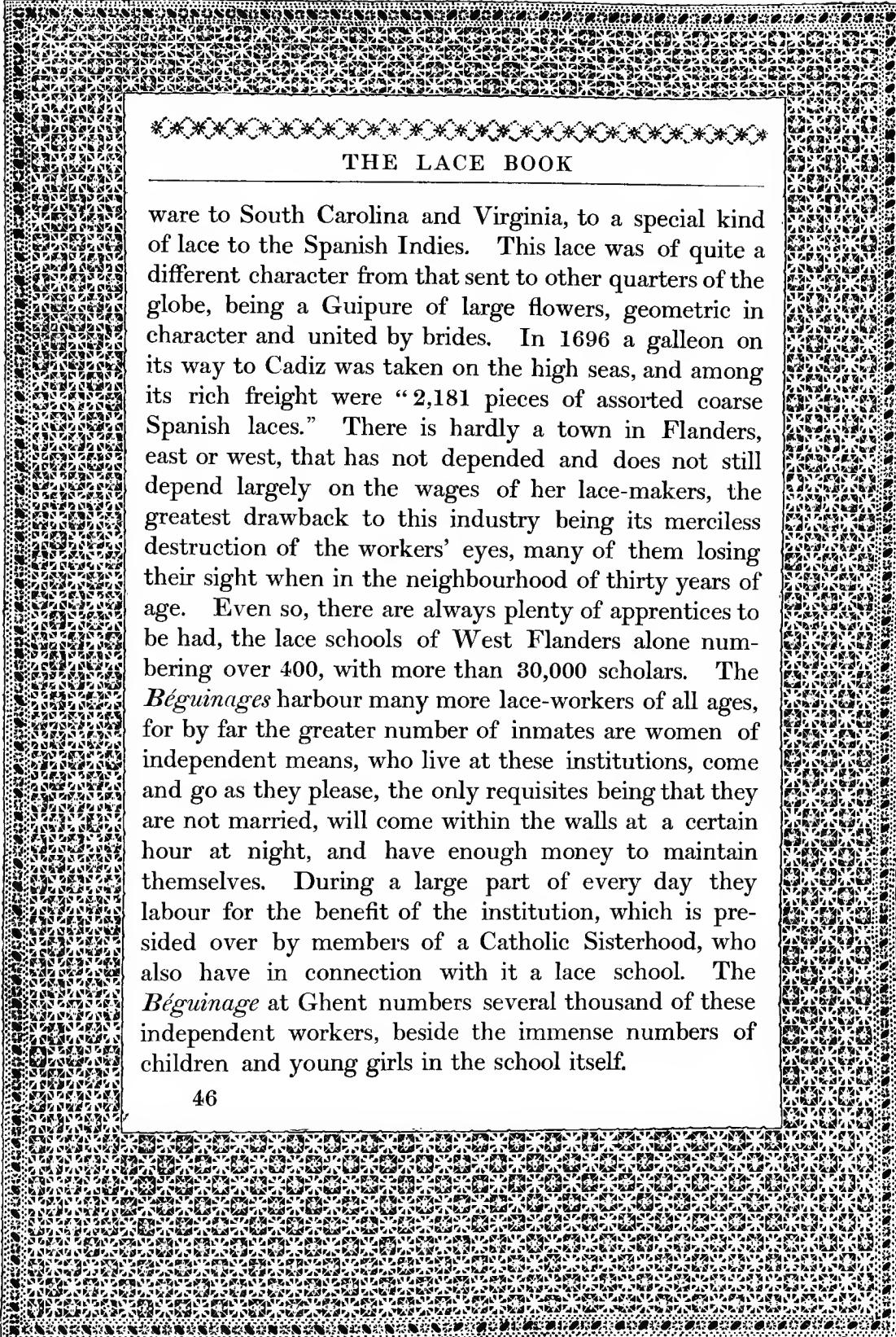
## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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and furs, the carving on the furniture, and the goldsmith's handiwork, are treated with reverent care. None painted more realistic pictures of this character than Mieris, while the portraits of Mierveldt, Jan de Bray, Franz Hals, and Rembrandt show what dignified and elegant gentlemen these burgomasters of the Netherlands were, how sumptuous was their attire, and with what a grand air they wore it. The lace roses on their shoes were not too small a detail to be duly given point for point, while the falling collars, fichus, cuffs, stomachers, and caps of their wives are painted with such faithfulness that the quality and kind of lace is easily discernible.

The use of lace seems to have been encouraged rather than repressed, and the chief care for the Dutch was to keep at home their skilful workers who were tempted to other countries to teach those less skilful the arts and crafts in which the Flemings excelled. So alarmed did the Flanders burgomasters become at the number of lace-makers that emigrated to France, attracted there by the offers of Colbert, that in December, 1698, an act was passed at Brussels, threatening with punishment any person who should entice away her work-people. Even with the loss of many skilled hands, more than enough lace was made for home consumption, and in 1768 England alone paid Flanders for lace, \$1,250,000 (£250,000).

The Dutch were always on the lookout and ready to supply any market with any article desired, from wooden



## THE LACE BOOK

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ware to South Carolina and Virginia, to a special kind of lace to the Spanish Indies. This lace was of quite a different character from that sent to other quarters of the globe, being a Guipure of large flowers, geometric in character and united by brides. In 1696 a galleon on its way to Cadiz was taken on the high seas, and among its rich freight were "2,181 pieces of assorted coarse Spanish laces." There is hardly a town in Flanders, east or west, that has not depended and does not still depend largely on the wages of her lace-makers, the greatest drawback to this industry being its merciless destruction of the workers' eyes, many of them losing their sight when in the neighbourhood of thirty years of age. Even so, there are always plenty of apprentices to be had, the lace schools of West Flanders alone numbering over 400, with more than 30,000 scholars. The *Béguinages* harbour many more lace-workers of all ages, for by far the greater number of inmates are women of independent means, who live at these institutions, come and go as they please, the only requisites being that they are not married, will come within the walls at a certain hour at night, and have enough money to maintain themselves. During a large part of every day they labour for the benefit of the institution, which is presided over by members of a Catholic Sisterhood, who also have in connection with it a lace school. The *Béguinage* at Ghent numbers several thousand of these independent workers, beside the immense numbers of children and young girls in the school itself.

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### THE GROWTH OF LACE

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Quite different is the position occupied by Spain with regard to the lace made within her borders. Quantities of course occupied the attention of the many nuns which dwelt in such a Roman Catholic country. They copied very faithfully the beautiful Gros Points de Venise, and these were used wholly for the Church, adorning its altars and the robes of the priests. Little was known of this store of lace treasures till the middle of the nineteenth century, for the Spanish grandee, ever a wearer of choice raiment, laced his garments with the products of Italy, France, and Flanders, or with laces of silver or gold. Few laces ever achieved the vogue of what was known as Point d'Espagne, the most splendid trimming of the seventeenth century, worn extensively by all the world of powerful and great, and, although called Spanish Point, yet largely made outside of Spain and sent there for sale. With the changes of fashion in both men and women's clothes the use of this lace has wholly declined, the remnant of its glory still shining in subdued form on the uniforms of the army and navy.

Spanish Blonde, the only other famous lace of Spain, is yet worn in mantillas and flounces; but in modern times this is no longer made in Spain except in small quantities, the French market supplying the demand, and making these laces in the well-known Spanish style, with a fine net ground and heavy florid pattern.

Germany never occupied an important place in the lace-making world, though she early began to copy industriously from France in the north and Italy in the

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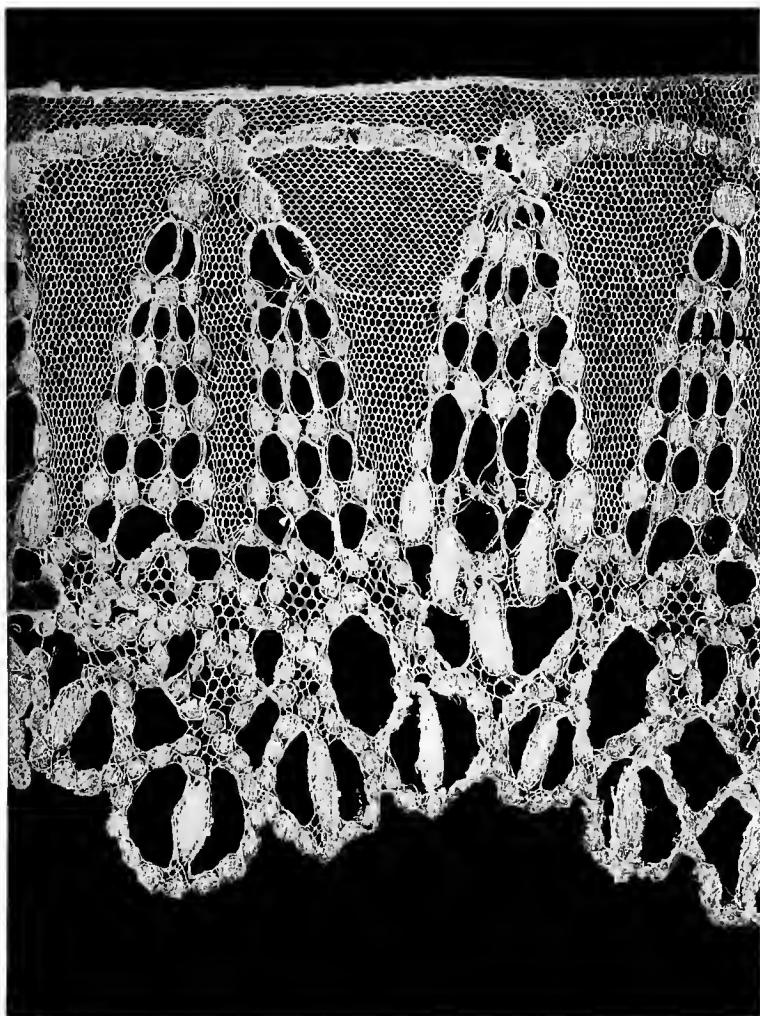
## THE LACE BOOK

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south. She never achieved fame in any branch of the industry, her sole great name in the work being that of Barbara Uttmann, who, having learned to make bobbin lace from a refugee from Brabant, introduced the work to her own countrywomen about 1561. French refugees settling in Dresden and that region brought their knowledge and skill with them, and taught the German workers, so that the quality soon improved.

Saxony Point, so called, was a close copy of Brussels Point, and, like that lace, extremely costly. Darned work, lacis, and embroidery on net were extensively made, and gold and silver lace was made at Hamburg (another point where the French refugees settled) and became known in Germany as Hamburg Point. Frederick William of Brandenburg encouraged lace-makers to settle at Potsdam, and France bought from Germany laces made by the very Frenchmen her intolerance had exiled. Bobbin lace gained a firm hold in Germany, and many varieties of coarse laces are still made there by the peasants. Some of the earliest known pattern-books were printed in Germany, and the patterns bear a strong resemblance to those in the Venetian books of the same period.

Nor is it possible to close this sketch of the use of lace without glancing at the colonies in North America, that followed at a distance and slowly, it is true, the fashions of the period, as they changed from time to time in the Old World. Little lace was made here. I have no doubt that many a Dutch *vrouw* brought her



**P**LATE XIII.—*Silver Point d'Espagne. Sixteenth Century.*



## THE GROWTH OF LACE

pillow and bobbins with her, and found time amid her varied duties to make enough "Potten Kant" to keep her caps trimmed, and enough to edge the many fine linen cloths which stood on table and mantel-shelf. There are one or two old pillows, still set with pins, the thread yellow with age and the bobbins quiet for many a long year, treasured in museums in New York State and in Maine. But these are only occasionally to be met with. Like most of our luxuries, our lace came from London, and plenty of it was on sale here. Too much attention and too much money was bestowed on these gauds in the opinion of our ancestors, and they found it necessary to frame sumptuary laws for the guidance of the light-minded, just as was being done in Europe, to check over-indulgence in world's gear.

In 1634 the Massachusetts General Court prohibited the purchase of "any app'ell either woolen, silke, or lynnен with any lace on it, silver, golde, silke, or threed." The very fact of this prohibition being framed shows that there were sufficient quantities of these articles on sale to draw attention to them.

From year to year these prohibitions continued in force, and in 1653, nearly twenty years later, we find a man taken before the Court for excess "in bootes, rebonds, gould and silver lace." This was the period of the lace "whisk," as the gorget was called, of lace-frilled boots, garters, and other extravagances.

Even from somewhat remote spots like Ipswich, Mass., which was settled in 1633 by the younger Win-

THE LACE BOOK

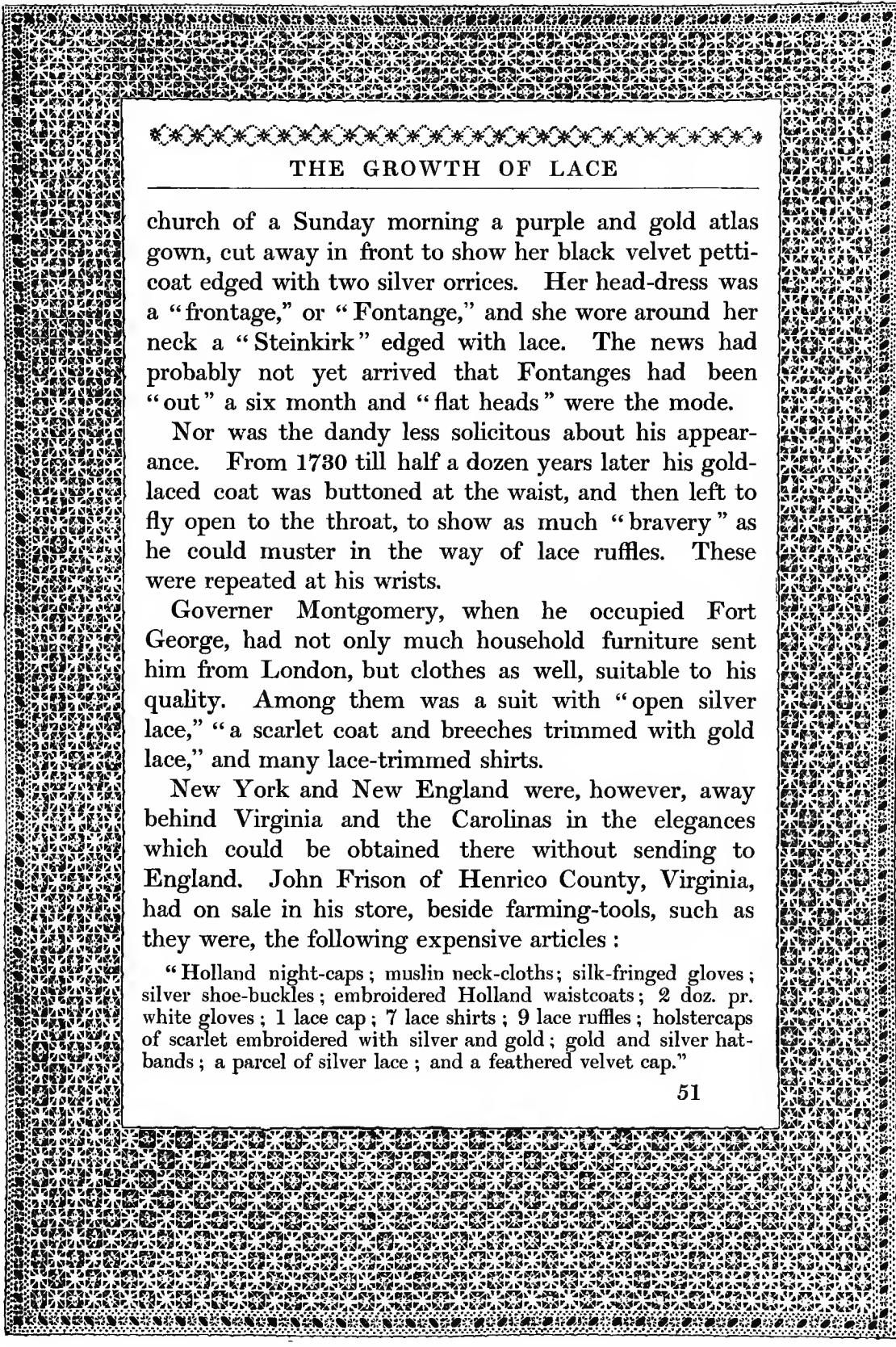
throp, to cut off the Jesuits from starting a mission there, Madame Rebekah Symonds, wife of Deputy Governor Symonds, sent to England for her clothes. About 1658, when the lady was close upon sixty years of age, she had from London shoes of damson-purple Turkey leather and satin, scarlet stockings, and a light violet-coloured petticoat, "grave and suitable for a person of quality." She had a spotted gauze gown, a "striped" silk, a cinnamon silk, and a flowered silk, "with partes (ruffles), as they rate them, to weare in the sleeves, as the fashion is for some." Silver gimp and ribbons for trimming, a black sarinden cloak with two black plush muffs, "modish and long," were among the next articles forwarded to her. She must have known the colony law :

"Noe p'son, either man or woman, shall make or buy any slashed cloathes, other than one slashe in each sleeve and one in the backe ; also all cutt works, imbroidered or needle worke capps ; bands and rayles are forbidden here after to be made and worne ; also all gold and silver girdles, hatt bands, belts, ruffs, beav'r hats are prohibited to be bought and worne."

Fortunately the Pilgrim Fathers left a loophole of escape, for they go on to say,—

"It is the meaneing of the Court that men and women shall haue liberty to weare out such app'ell as they are now provided of, except the immoderate greate sleeves, slashed app'ell, greate rayles, and long wings."

In more liberal New York fine clothes were more freely worn. In 1700 the wife of Colonel Bayard wore to



## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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church of a Sunday morning a purple and gold atlas gown, cut away in front to show her black velvet petticoat edged with two silver orrices. Her head-dress was a "frontage," or "Fontange," and she wore around her neck a "Steinkirk" edged with lace. The news had probably not yet arrived that Fontanges had been "out" a six month and "flat heads" were the mode.

Nor was the dandy less solicitous about his appearance. From 1730 till half a dozen years later his gold-laced coat was buttoned at the waist, and then left to fly open to the throat, to show as much "bravery" as he could muster in the way of lace ruffles. These were repeated at his wrists.

Gouverner Montgomery, when he occupied Fort George, had not only much household furniture sent him from London, but clothes as well, suitable to his quality. Among them was a suit with "open silver lace," "a scarlet coat and breeches trimmed with gold lace," and many lace-trimmed shirts.

New York and New England were, however, away behind Virginia and the Carolinas in the elegances which could be obtained there without sending to England. John Frison of Henrico County, Virginia, had on sale in his store, beside farming-tools, such as they were, the following expensive articles :

"Holland night-caps; muslin neck-cloths; silk-fringed gloves; silver shoe-buckles; embroidered Holland waistcoats; 2 doz. pr. white gloves; 1 lace cap; 7 lace shirts; 9 lace ruffles; holstercaps of scarlet embroidered with silver and gold; gold and silver hat-bands; a parcel of silver lace; and a feathered velvet cap."

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## THE LACE BOOK

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The country, as it prospered, constantly demanded what was worn in England and the Continent, and by-and-by the newspapers had many advertisements of laces for sale. The presence of the many officers who came constantly caused a demand for gold and silver lace, and by 1760 there were on sale in many places in New York, "gold and silver vellum lace, gold and silver bullion fringe, silk sashes, and hat feathers, for the gentlemen of the militia and army."

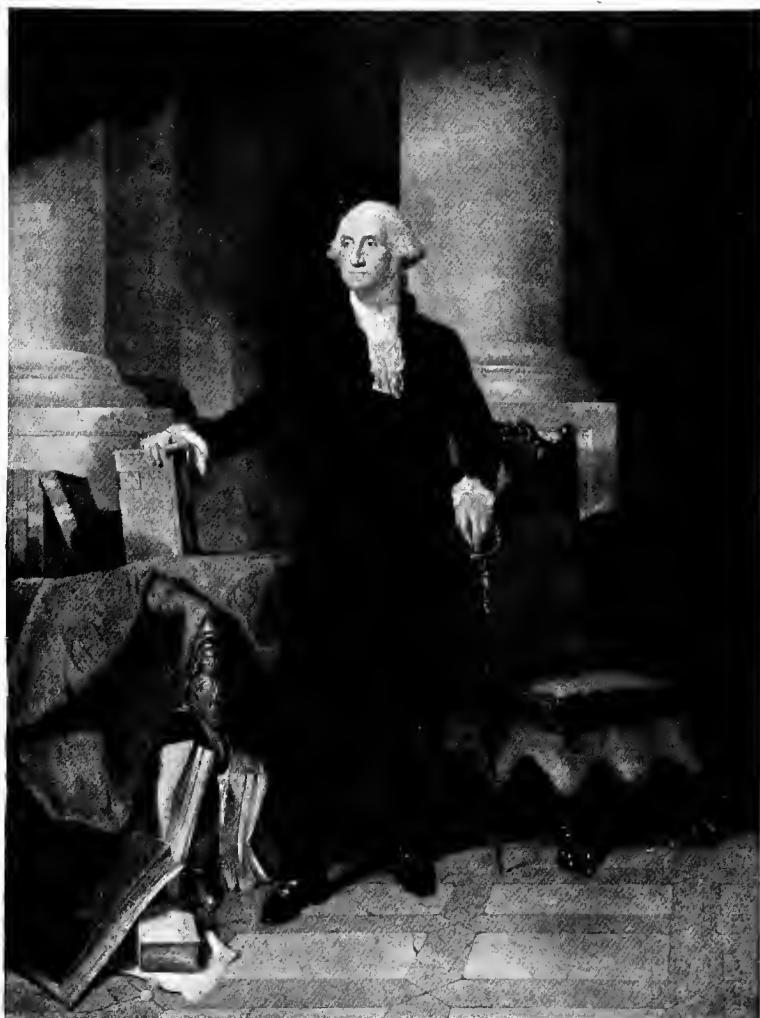
Indeed, ten years earlier, there was enough finery here to necessitate the services of a cleaner, who advertises in the following words :

"Thomas Davis, Dry Scourer from London, now lives at the house of Mr. Benjamin Leigh, School Master, in Bridge Street, near the Long Bridge, where he cleans all sorts of Gentlemens and Ladies cloathes, Gold and Silver lace, Brocades and embroidered work, Points d'Espagne, cuffs and Robings, wrought beds, hangings and tapestry, flower'd Velvets, and chints, without hurting their flowers, at a reasonable rate."

We find aprons were as fashionable in New York as they were in England, even though Beau Nash declared them only fit for Abigails. By 1751 you could get them of "flower'd and plain gauze, lawn, gauze with Trolley lace, and finely flower'd."

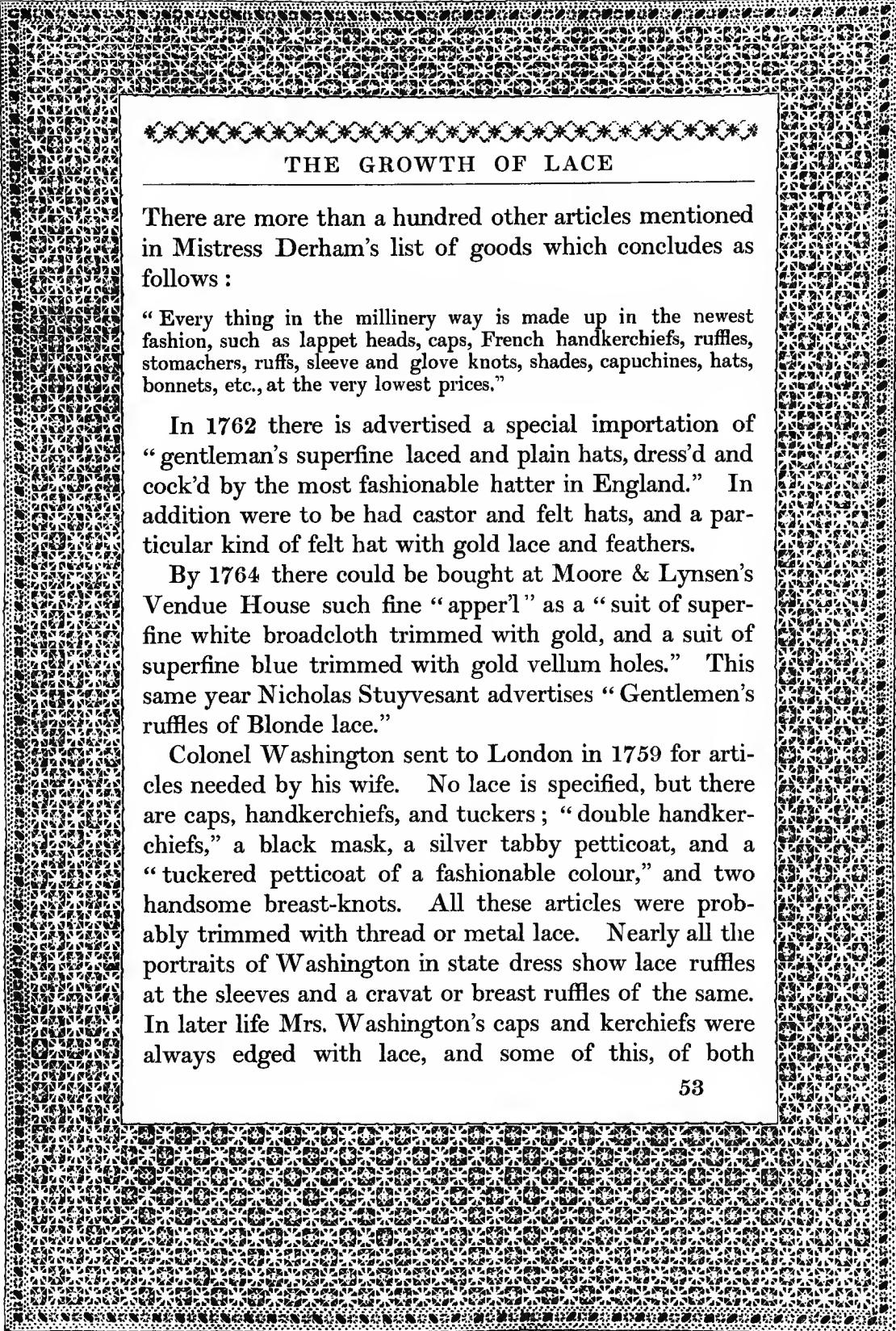
Three years later (1754) appeared this announcement :

"M. Derham, milliner from London by way of Philadelphia in the *Rachel*, Captain Joy, at her shop near Alderman Livingston's in South Street, has brought a genteel and new assortment of figur'd ribbons, plain ducapes, satten do, gauzes, catgut, Paris net, white and color'd blond lace, silk edgings, thread do, black silk laces and fringes, hollands, minionette and other muslins."



**PLATE XIV.**—Portrait of George Washington, by Rothermel. Showing use of lace, probably Mechlin, in Colonial costume.





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## THE GROWTH OF LACE

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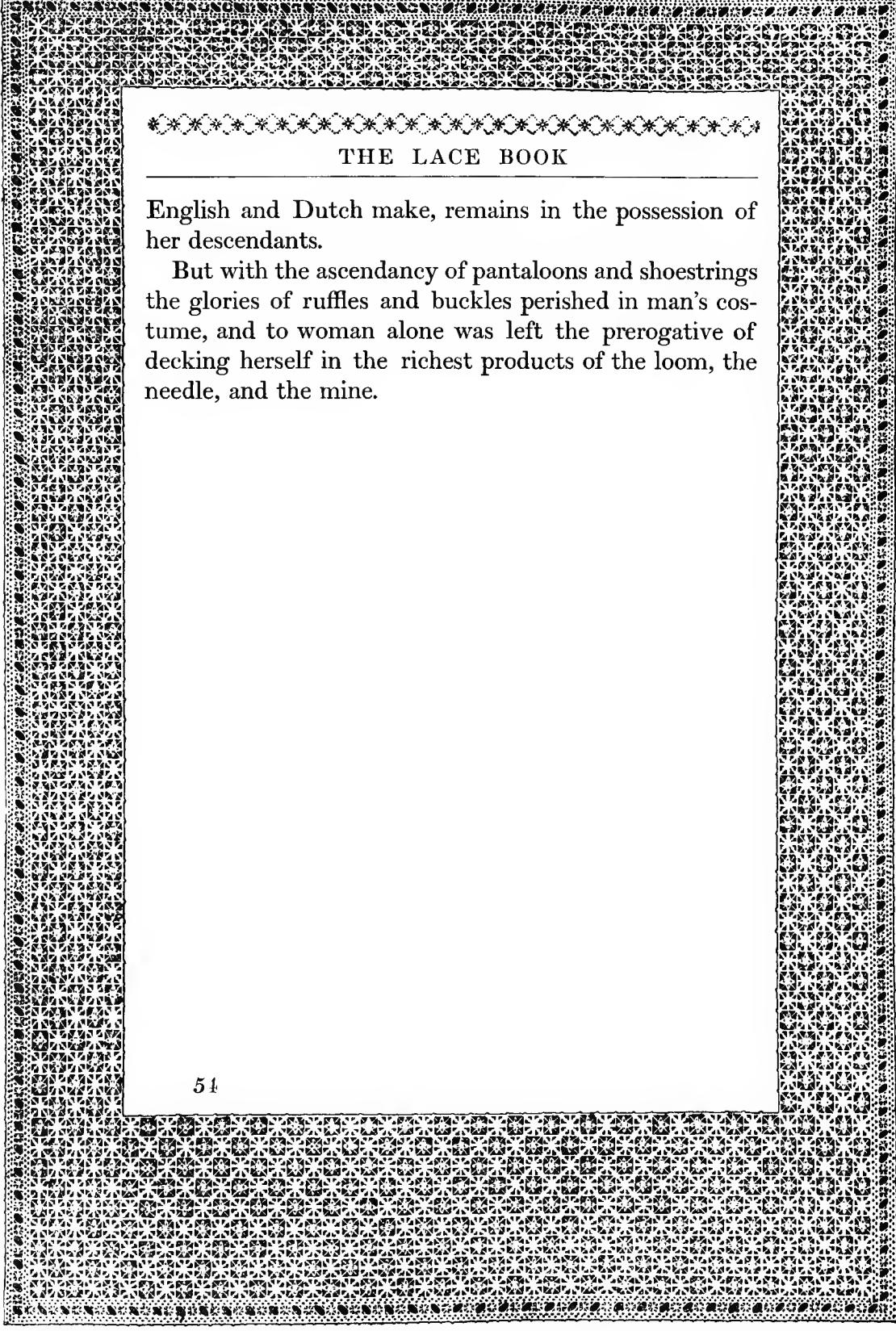
There are more than a hundred other articles mentioned in Mistress Derham's list of goods which concludes as follows :

“ Every thing in the millinery way is made up in the newest fashion, such as lappet heads, caps, French handkerchiefs, ruffles, stomachers, ruffs, sleeve and glove knots, shades, capuchines, hats, bonnets, etc., at the very lowest prices.”

In 1762 there is advertised a special importation of “gentleman's superfine laced and plain hats, dress'd and cock'd by the most fashionable hatter in England.” In addition were to be had castor and felt hats, and a particular kind of felt hat with gold lace and feathers.

By 1764 there could be bought at Moore & Lynsen's Vendue House such fine “upper'l” as a “suit of superfine white broadcloth trimmed with gold, and a suit of superfine blue trimmed with gold vellum holes.” This same year Nicholas Stuyvesant advertises “Gentlemen's ruffles of Blonde lace.”

Colonel Washington sent to London in 1759 for articles needed by his wife. No lace is specified, but there are caps, handkerchiefs, and tuckers; “double handkerchiefs,” a black mask, a silver tabby petticoat, and a “tuckered petticoat of a fashionable colour,” and two handsome breast-knots. All these articles were probably trimmed with thread or metal lace. Nearly all the portraits of Washington in state dress show lace ruffles at the sleeves and a cravat or breast ruffles of the same. In later life Mrs. Washington's caps and kerchiefs were always edged with lace, and some of this, of both

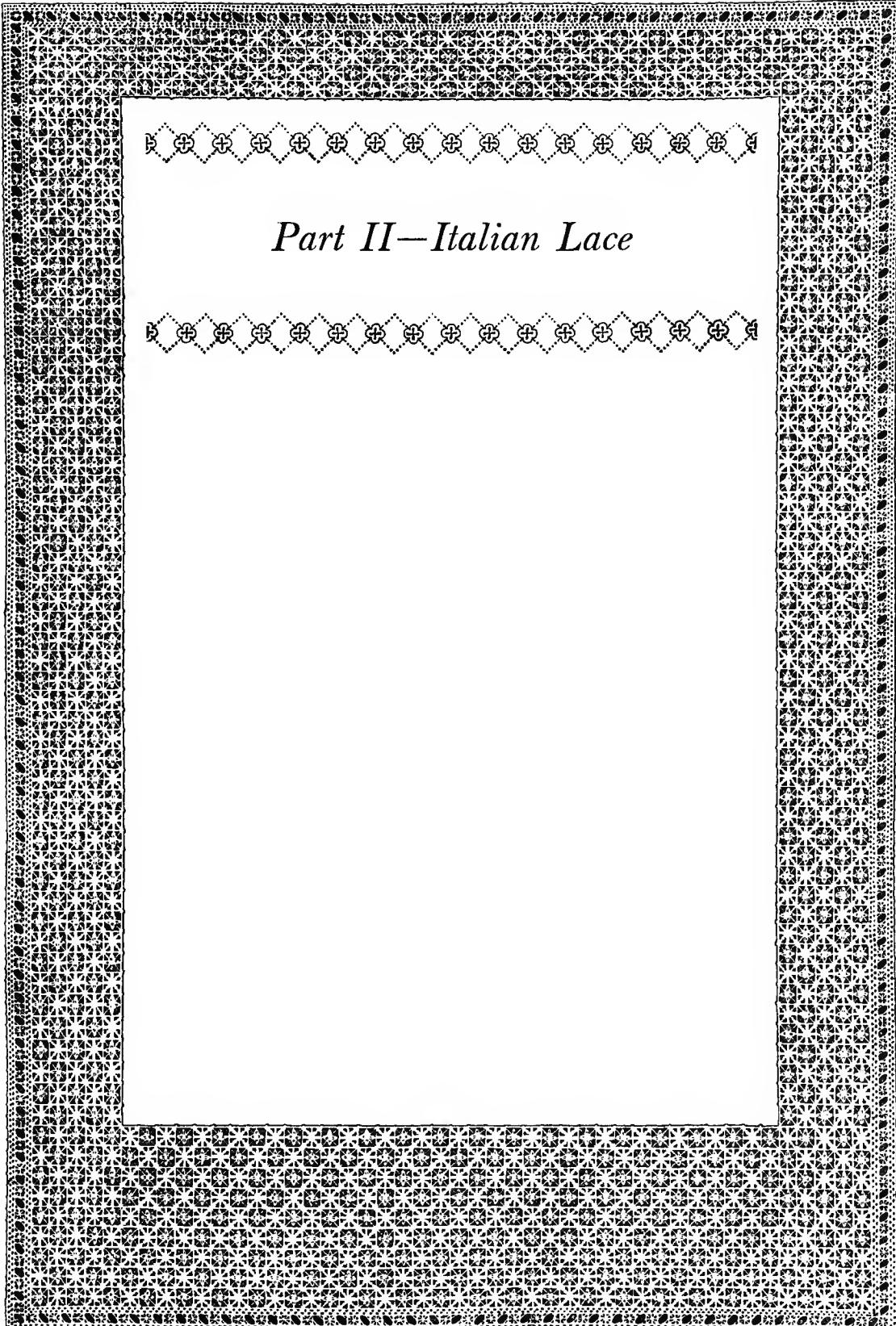


## THE LACE BOOK

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English and Dutch make, remains in the possession of her descendants.

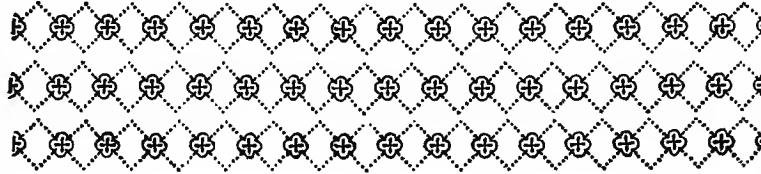
But with the ascendancy of pantaloons and shoestrings the glories of ruffles and buckles perished in man's costume, and to woman alone was left the prerogative of decking herself in the richest products of the loom, the needle, and the mine.



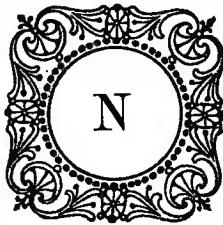
*Part II—Italian Lace*

**V**ELLETO uno d'oro filato.  
Payro uno fodrete di cambria lavorate a gugia.  
Lenzuolo uno di revo di tele cinque lavorato a punto.  
Peza una de tarnete d'argento facte a stelle.  
Lenzuolo uno de tele, quattro lavorato a radexelo.  
Peze quattro de radexelo per mettere ad uno moscheto.  
Tarneta una d'oro et seda negra facta da ossi.  
Pecto uno d'oro facto a grupi.  
Lavoro uno de rechamo facto a grupi, dove era suso le perle de Madona Biancha.  
Binda una lavarata a poncto de doii fuax per uno lenzuolo."

From the Inventory of Angela and Ippolita Sforza-Visconti.  
Milan, September 12, 1493.

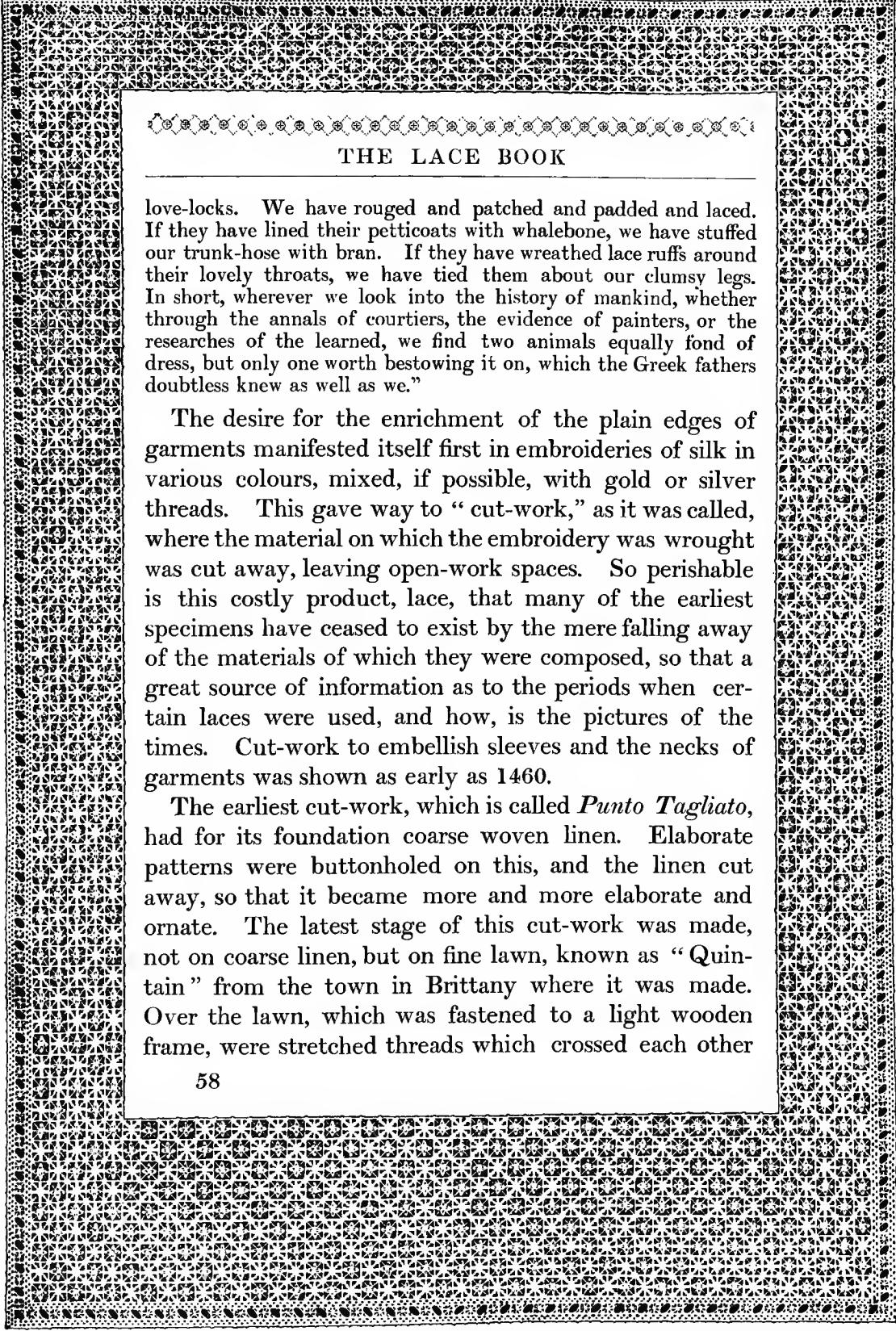


## *Part II—Italian Lace*



O other article of attire has been so hemmed and hedged about with restrictions, orders, edicts, and laws as this, the most becoming of all the frivolities of woman's attire. Writing in the twentieth century, when the utilitarian and entirely ungraceful habits worn by men have superseded those rich and graceful costumes of a century or two ago, one is led perforce to grant to women the sole use of this most elegant ornament. This is, however, only a matter of evolution. At first the richest laces were worn by men, and there was not a single article of attire, from hat to shoes, which was not decorated with it in one form or another. In fact, as a sprightly writer in the "Quarterly Review" for 1852 puts it,—

—“we cannot point to one single excess or caprice of dress which has appeared on the beautiful person of woman, that has not had its counterpart, as bad or worse, upon the ugly body of man. We have had the same effeminate stuffs—the same fine laces—the same rich furs—the same costly jewels. We have had as much gold and embroidery, and more tinsel and trumpery. We have worn long hair, and large sleeves, and tight waists and full petticoats. We have sported stays and stomachers, muffs, earrings and



## THE LACE BOOK

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love-locks. We have rouged and patched and padded and laced. If they have lined their petticoats with whalebone, we have stuffed our trunk-hose with bran. If they have wreathed lace ruffs around their lovely throats, we have tied them about our clumsy legs. In short, wherever we look into the history of mankind, whether through the annals of courtiers, the evidence of painters, or the researches of the learned, we find two animals equally fond of dress, but only one worth bestowing it on, which the Greek fathers doubtless knew as well as we."

The desire for the enrichment of the plain edges of garments manifested itself first in embroideries of silk in various colours, mixed, if possible, with gold or silver threads. This gave way to "cut-work," as it was called, where the material on which the embroidery was wrought was cut away, leaving open-work spaces. So perishable is this costly product, lace, that many of the earliest specimens have ceased to exist by the mere falling away of the materials of which they were composed, so that a great source of information as to the periods when certain laces were used, and how, is the pictures of the times. Cut-work to embellish sleeves and the necks of garments was shown as early as 1460.

The earliest cut-work, which is called *Punto Tagliato*, had for its foundation coarse woven linen. Elaborate patterns were buttonholed on this, and the linen cut away, so that it became more and more elaborate and ornate. The latest stage of this cut-work was made, not on coarse linen, but on fine lawn, known as "Quintain" from the town in Brittany where it was made. Over the lawn, which was fastened to a light wooden frame, were stretched threads which crossed each other



**P**LATE XV.—Princess Eleonora di Mantova.  
Ruff and cuffs of cut-work. Portrait by Por-  
bus the younger (1540-1580).





## ITALIAN LACE

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back and forth, and which were sewed to the lawn with buttonholing, such parts of the lawn as were unnecessary being cut away.

Little by little new stitches were tried, different designs were introduced, and the first work which bore any resemblance to lace and eventually grew into its finer forms was called "Drawn Work," or *Punto Tirato*, some of it being of great delicacy and beauty.

*Punto a Reticella*, or "Greek lace," as it was commonly called, was made in both insertions and edgings. It was really the first needle point, as well as the first lace; since both cut- and drawn-work, which had preceded it, were more lace-like material than real lace. Greek Points or *Reticellas* were made in abundance from 1480 to 1625. Not only did they decorate vestments and altar-cloths, but whole shrouds were made of them as well. The earliest of these points—made in stiff geometric designs, such as were used in Gothic architecture—were at first threads buttonholed over, the foundation being cut away, or threads being drawn out, and little loops called "picots" or "purls" being set along at intervals. Later the varieties of pattern became greatly extended, wheels were introduced, and triangles with inside ornaments of great beauty. Designs alternated in the points, giving it great variety, and toward the end of its career the patterns lost their geometric tendency, and, as far as the limited nature of the work would allow, followed the style of design popular in other laces of the Renaissance. In some of

## THE LACE BOOK

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the richest of the old Greek Points, to add to their beauty, silk threads of different colours were introduced as well as gold and silver. The best means of studying this lace is in the splendid portraits of the period, when artists delighted to linger over every loop and purl, and rendered the lace with a fidelity which betrayed their appreciation of it.

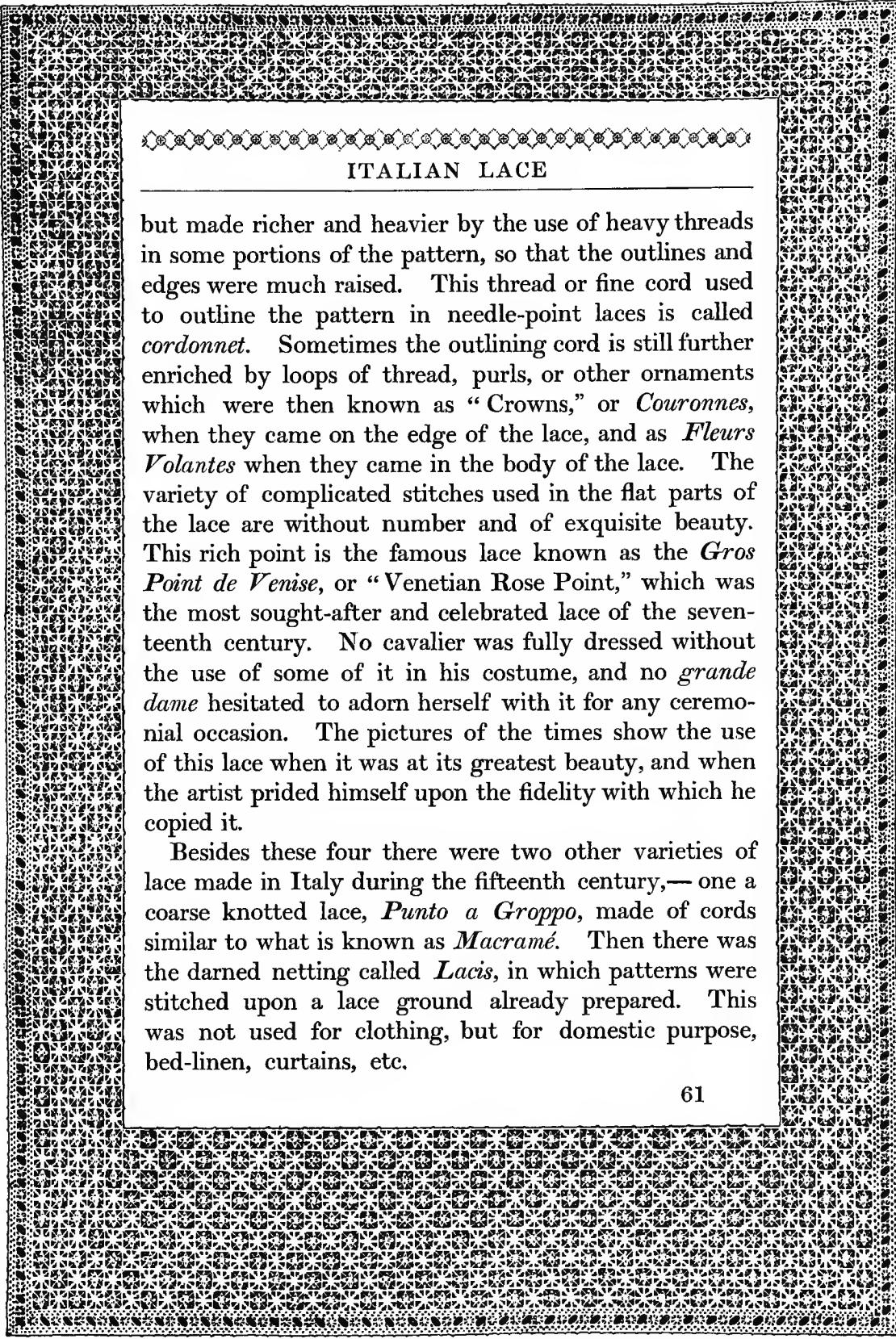
Although it was freely worn in France, Germany, England, Spain, and Flanders, little of it was made in any of these countries. In its home, Greece, and in the Ionian Isles and Italy, enough was made to supply what was needed in all these other countries. As finer laces were made, the *Reticellas* fell into disuse, and their production declined. With each succeeding year, under the skilful fingers and in the artistic atmosphere of Venice, all work became more and more beautiful, and the next step forward was *Punto in Aria*,—literally “point in air,” showing the departure from cut-work, or drawn-work, in having no cloth or thread foundation upon which the pattern was worked. It was in reality what we call “lace,” worked on a parchment pattern upon which the design was clearly drawn, and enriched with many very beautiful stitches, the various parts of the design being connected with “brides,” or bars, made of buttonholing and ornamented with loops of thread and sometimes with tiny wheels.

It was not difficult to trace how, little by little, this lace became the celebrated *Punto Tagliato a Fogliami*, which was made in the same manner as *Punto in Aria*,



**P**LATE XVI.—Eleanor of Toledo, wife of Cosimo II, Duke of Florence, died 1562. Showing chemisette of drawn-work very beautiful in design, and net of knotted gold threads. Portrait by Bronzino.



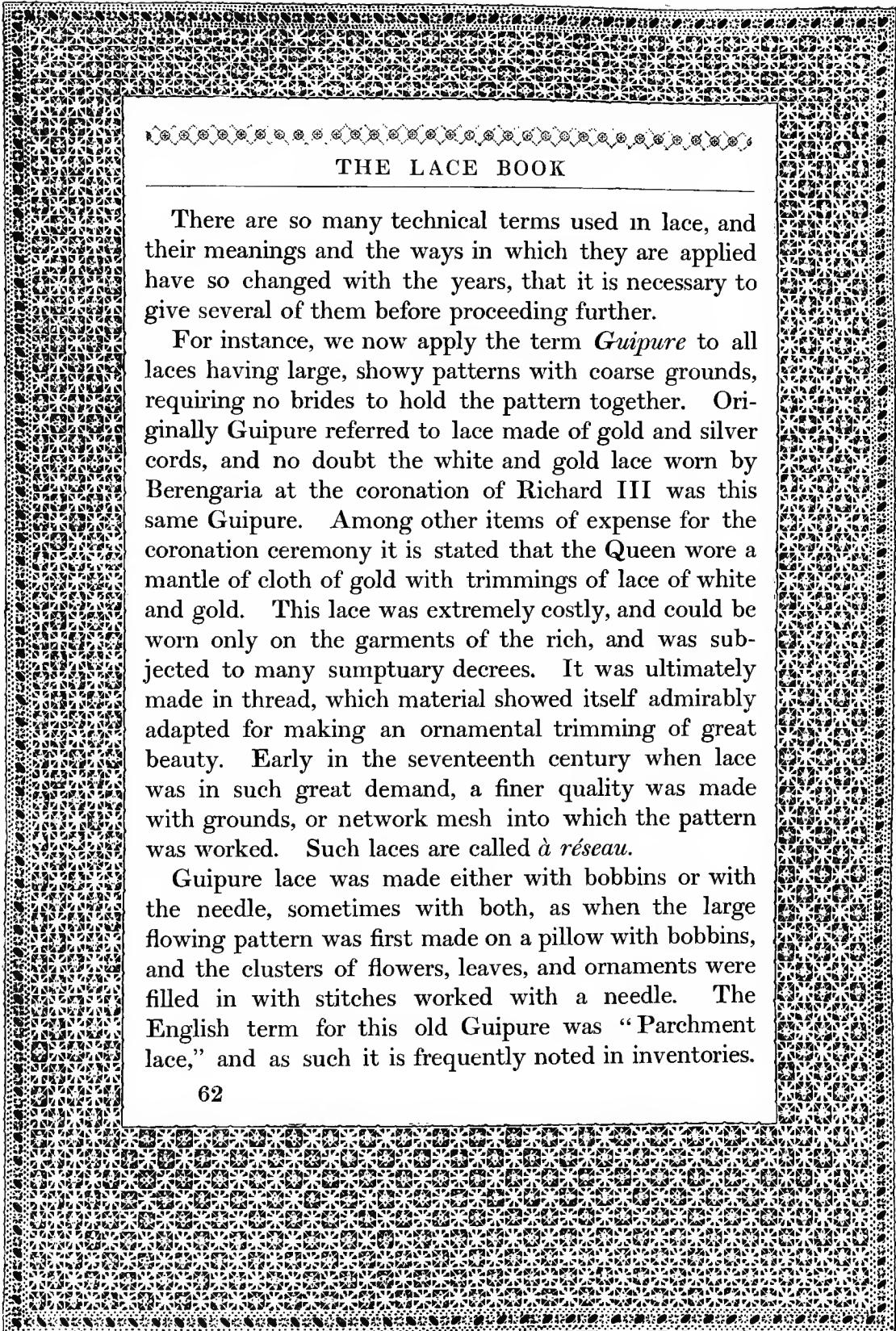


## ITALIAN LACE

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but made richer and heavier by the use of heavy threads in some portions of the pattern, so that the outlines and edges were much raised. This thread or fine cord used to outline the pattern in needle-point laces is called *cordonnet*. Sometimes the outlining cord is still further enriched by loops of thread, purls, or other ornaments which were then known as "Crowns," or *Couronnes*, when they came on the edge of the lace, and as *Fleurs Volantes* when they came in the body of the lace. The variety of complicated stitches used in the flat parts of the lace are without number and of exquisite beauty. This rich point is the famous lace known as the *Gros Point de Venise*, or "Venetian Rose Point," which was the most sought-after and celebrated lace of the seventeenth century. No cavalier was fully dressed without the use of some of it in his costume, and no *grande dame* hesitated to adorn herself with it for any ceremonial occasion. The pictures of the times show the use of this lace when it was at its greatest beauty, and when the artist prided himself upon the fidelity with which he copied it.

Besides these four there were two other varieties of lace made in Italy during the fifteenth century,— one a coarse knotted lace, *Punto a Groppo*, made of cords similar to what is known as *Macramé*. Then there was the darned netting called *Lacis*, in which patterns were stitched upon a lace ground already prepared. This was not used for clothing, but for domestic purpose, bed-linen, curtains, etc.



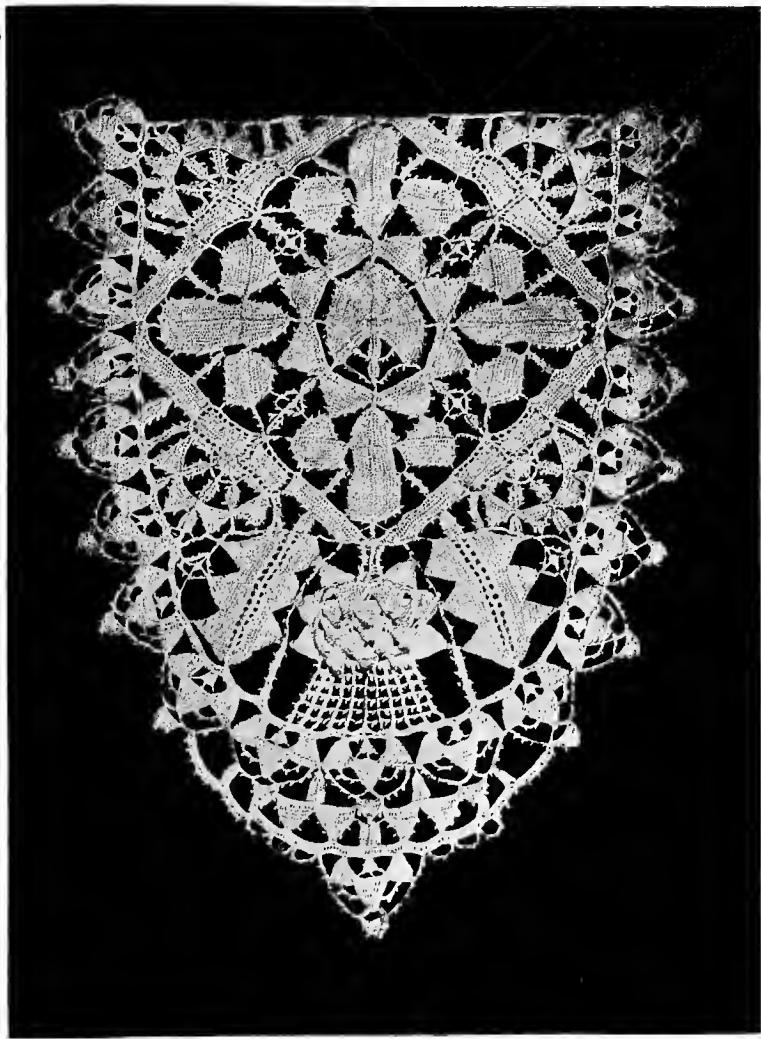
## THE LACE BOOK

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There are so many technical terms used in lace, and their meanings and the ways in which they are applied have so changed with the years, that it is necessary to give several of them before proceeding further.

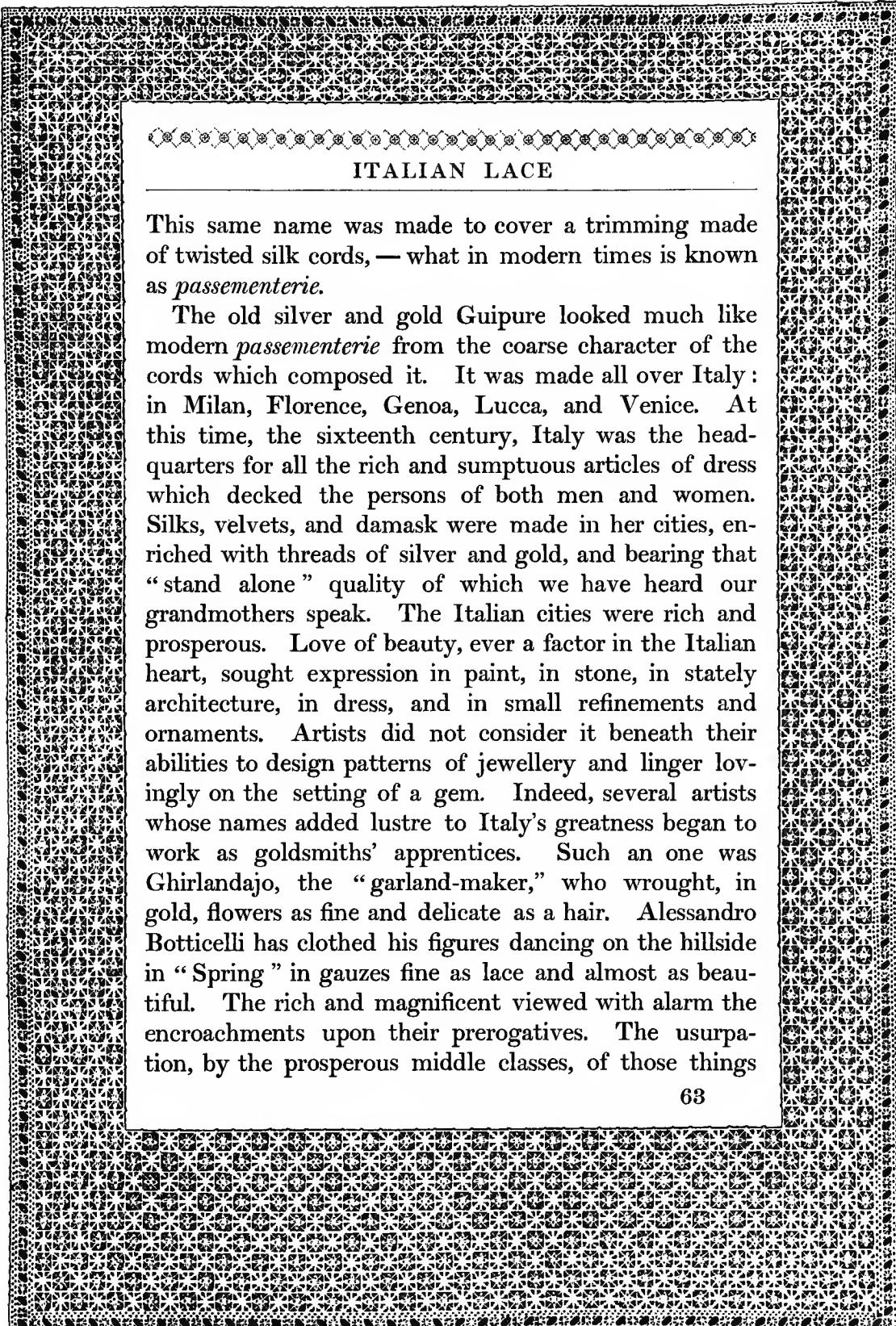
For instance, we now apply the term *Guipure* to all laces having large, showy patterns with coarse grounds, requiring no brides to hold the pattern together. Originally *Guipure* referred to lace made of gold and silver cords, and no doubt the white and gold lace worn by Berengaria at the coronation of Richard III was this same *Guipure*. Among other items of expense for the coronation ceremony it is stated that the Queen wore a mantle of cloth of gold with trimmings of lace of white and gold. This lace was extremely costly, and could be worn only on the garments of the rich, and was subjected to many sumptuary decrees. It was ultimately made in thread, which material showed itself admirably adapted for making an ornamental trimming of great beauty. Early in the seventeenth century when lace was in such great demand, a finer quality was made with grounds, or network mesh into which the pattern was worked. Such laces are called *à réseau*.

*Guipure* lace was made either with bobbins or with the needle, sometimes with both, as when the large flowing pattern was first made on a pillow with bobbins, and the clusters of flowers, leaves, and ornaments were filled in with stitches worked with a needle. The English term for this old *Guipure* was "Parchment lace," and as such it is frequently noted in inventories.



**P**LATE XVII.—“*Punto in aria.*” *Italian*  
*needle point. Early Sixteenth Century.*



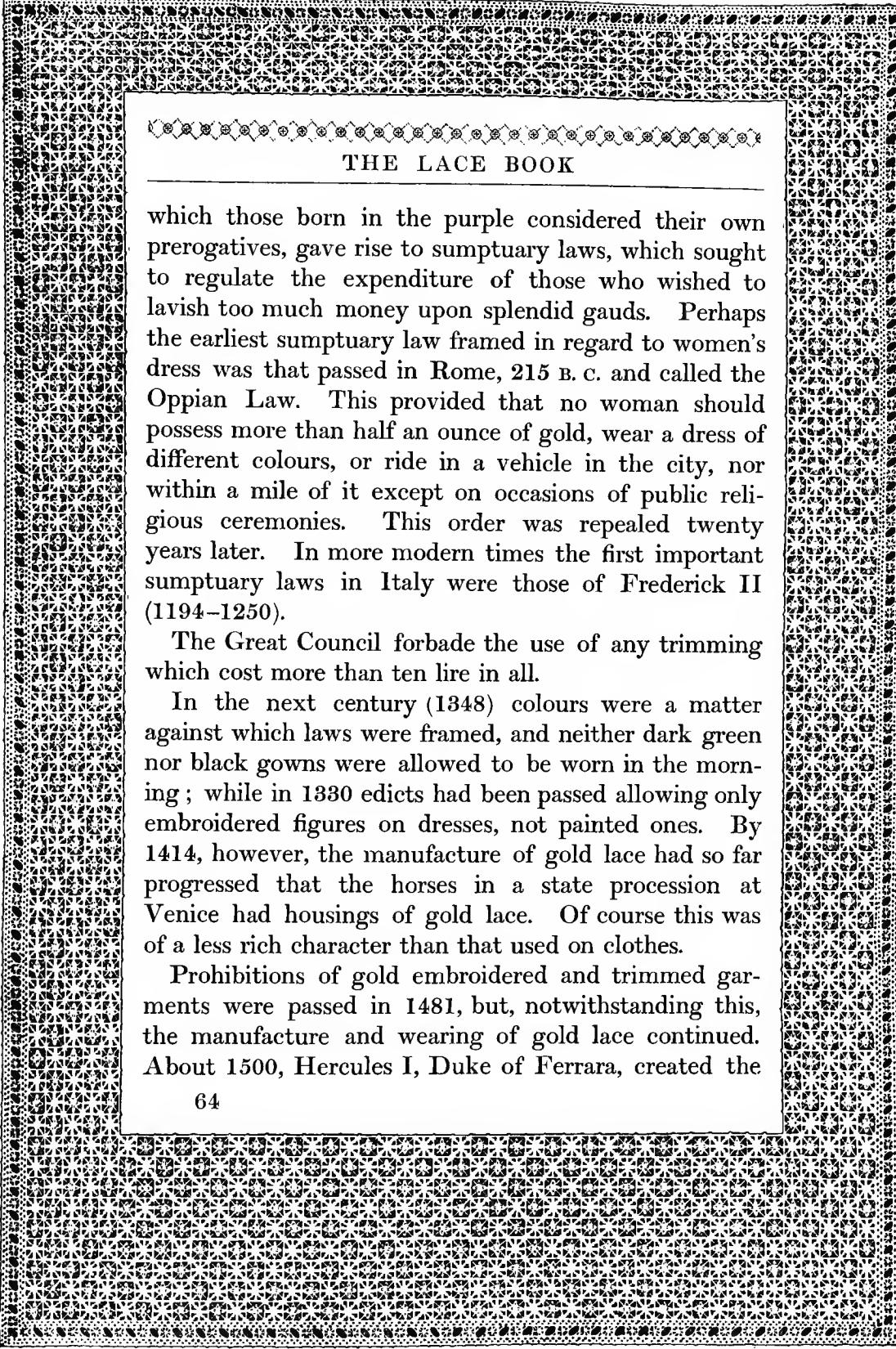


## ITALIAN LACE

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This same name was made to cover a trimming made of twisted silk cords,—what in modern times is known as *passementerie*.

The old silver and gold Guipure looked much like modern *passementerie* from the coarse character of the cords which composed it. It was made all over Italy: in Milan, Florence, Genoa, Lucca, and Venice. At this time, the sixteenth century, Italy was the headquarters for all the rich and sumptuous articles of dress which decked the persons of both men and women. Silks, velvets, and damask were made in her cities, enriched with threads of silver and gold, and bearing that “stand alone” quality of which we have heard our grandmothers speak. The Italian cities were rich and prosperous. Love of beauty, ever a factor in the Italian heart, sought expression in paint, in stone, in stately architecture, in dress, and in small refinements and ornaments. Artists did not consider it beneath their abilities to design patterns of jewellery and linger lovingly on the setting of a gem. Indeed, several artists whose names added lustre to Italy’s greatness began to work as goldsmiths’ apprentices. Such an one was Ghirlandajo, the “garland-maker,” who wrought, in gold, flowers as fine and delicate as a hair. Alessandro Botticelli has clothed his figures dancing on the hillside in “Spring” in gauzes fine as lace and almost as beautiful. The rich and magnificent viewed with alarm the encroachments upon their prerogatives. The usurpation, by the prosperous middle classes, of those things



## THE LACE BOOK

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which those born in the purple considered their own prerogatives, gave rise to sumptuary laws, which sought to regulate the expenditure of those who wished to lavish too much money upon splendid gauds. Perhaps the earliest sumptuary law framed in regard to women's dress was that passed in Rome, 215 B. C. and called the Oppian Law. This provided that no woman should possess more than half an ounce of gold, wear a dress of different colours, or ride in a vehicle in the city, nor within a mile of it except on occasions of public religious ceremonies. This order was repealed twenty years later. In more modern times the first important sumptuary laws in Italy were those of Frederick II (1194-1250).

The Great Council forbade the use of any trimming which cost more than ten lire in all.

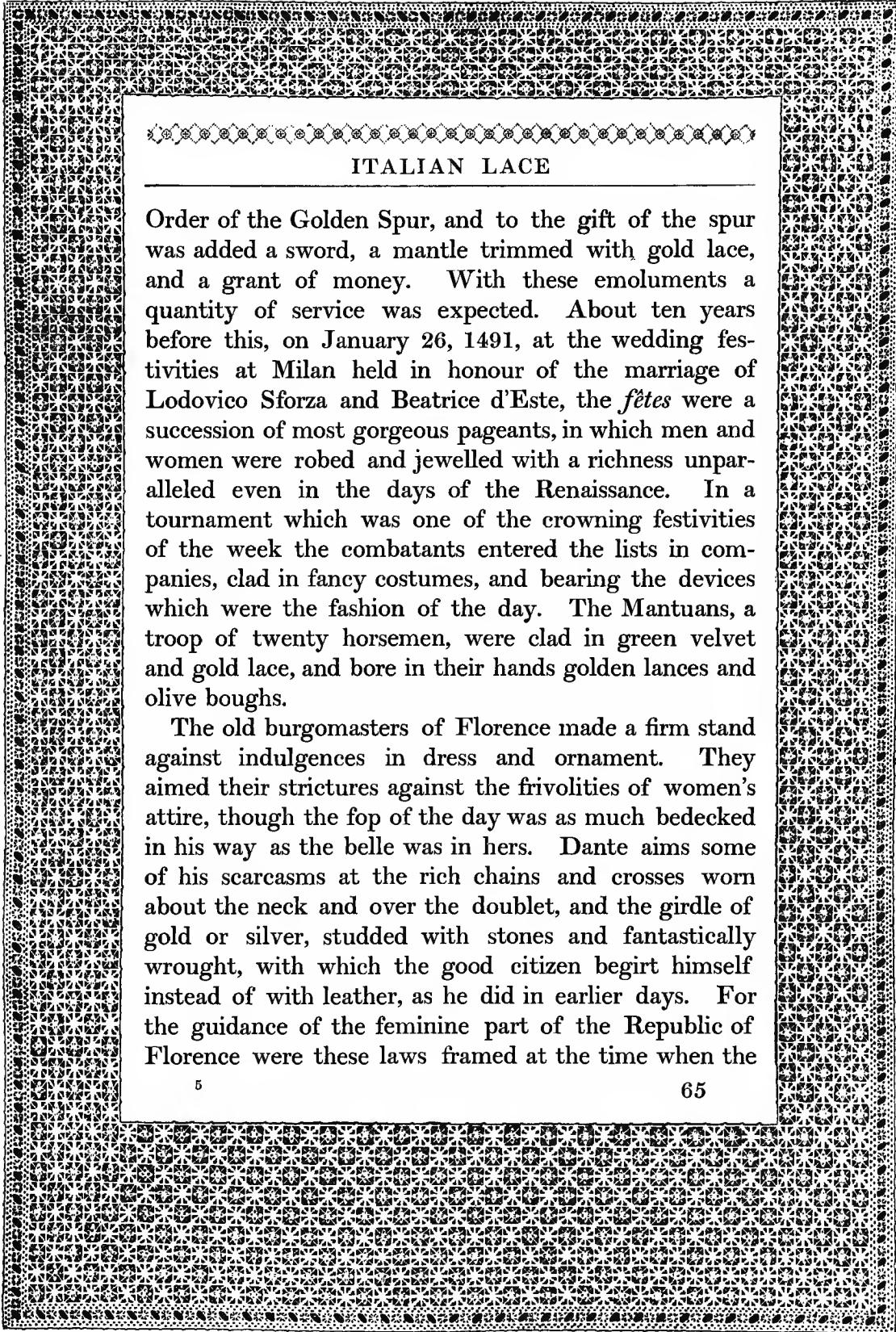
In the next century (1348) colours were a matter against which laws were framed, and neither dark green nor black gowns were allowed to be worn in the morning; while in 1330 edicts had been passed allowing only embroidered figures on dresses, not painted ones. By 1414, however, the manufacture of gold lace had so far progressed that the horses in a state procession at Venice had housings of gold lace. Of course this was of a less rich character than that used on clothes.

Prohibitions of gold embroidered and trimmed garments were passed in 1481, but, notwithstanding this, the manufacture and wearing of gold lace continued. About 1500, Hercules I, Duke of Ferrara, created the



**P**LATE XVIII.—*Gros Point de Venise. Sixteenth Century. In process of construction.*



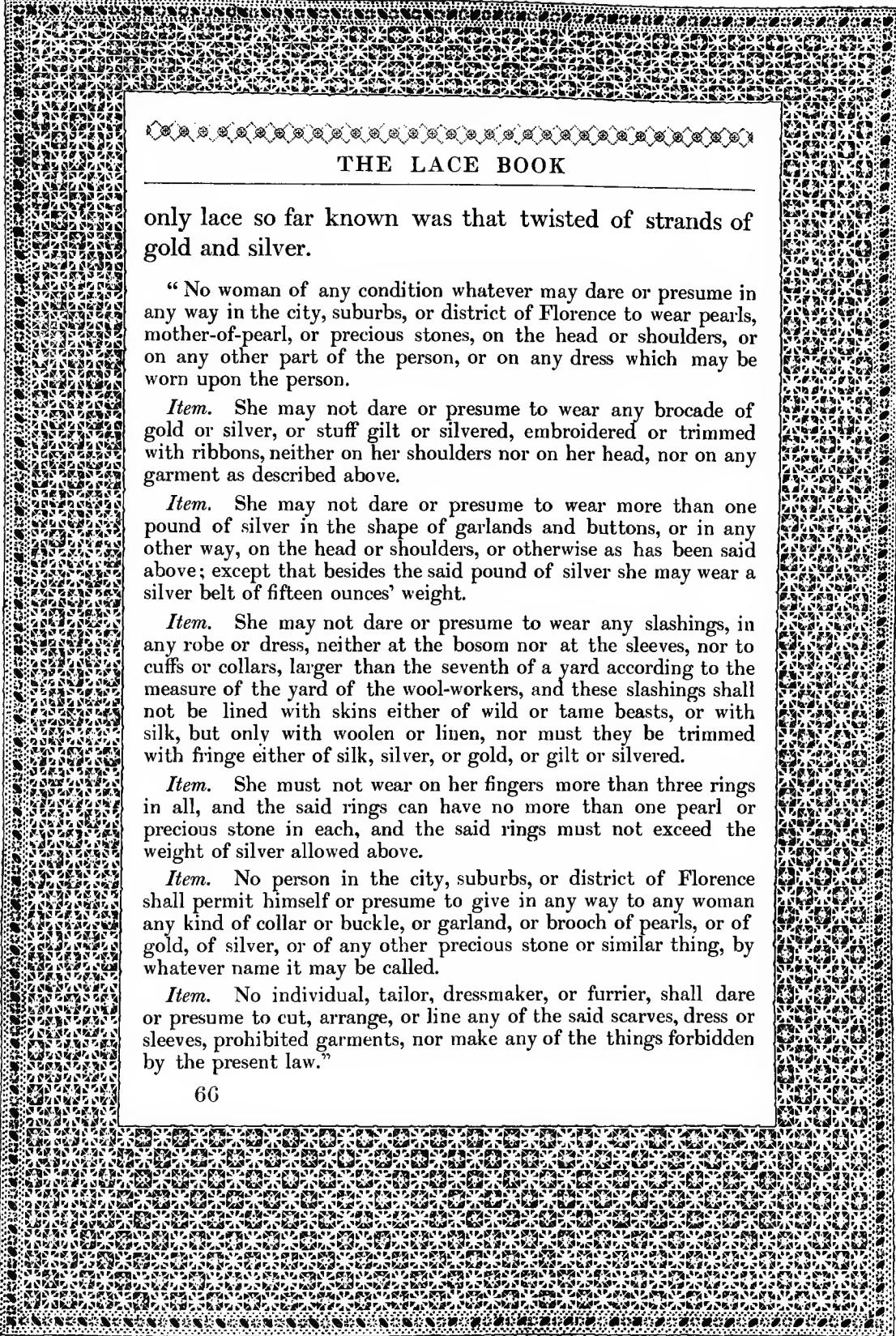


## ITALIAN LACE

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Order of the Golden Spur, and to the gift of the spur was added a sword, a mantle trimmed with gold lace, and a grant of money. With these emoluments a quantity of service was expected. About ten years before this, on January 26, 1491, at the wedding festivities at Milan held in honour of the marriage of Lodovico Sforza and Beatrice d'Este, the *fêtes* were a succession of most gorgeous pageants, in which men and women were robed and jewelled with a richness unparalleled even in the days of the Renaissance. In a tournament which was one of the crowning festivities of the week the combatants entered the lists in companies, clad in fancy costumes, and bearing the devices which were the fashion of the day. The Mantuans, a troop of twenty horsemen, were clad in green velvet and gold lace, and bore in their hands golden lances and olive boughs.

The old burgomasters of Florence made a firm stand against indulgences in dress and ornament. They aimed their strictures against the frivolities of women's attire, though the fop of the day was as much bedecked in his way as the belle was in hers. Dante aims some of his scarcasm at the rich chains and crosses worn about the neck and over the doublet, and the girdle of gold or silver, studded with stones and fantastically wrought, with which the good citizen begirt himself instead of with leather, as he did in earlier days. For the guidance of the feminine part of the Republic of Florence were these laws framed at the time when the



## THE LACE BOOK

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only lace so far known was that twisted of strands of gold and silver.

“No woman of any condition whatever may dare or presume in any way in the city, suburbs, or district of Florence to wear pearls, mother-of-pearl, or precious stones, on the head or shoulders, or on any other part of the person, or on any dress which may be worn upon the person.

*Item.* She may not dare or presume to wear any brocade of gold or silver, or stuff gilt or silvered, embroidered or trimmed with ribbons, neither on her shoulders nor on her head, nor on any garment as described above.

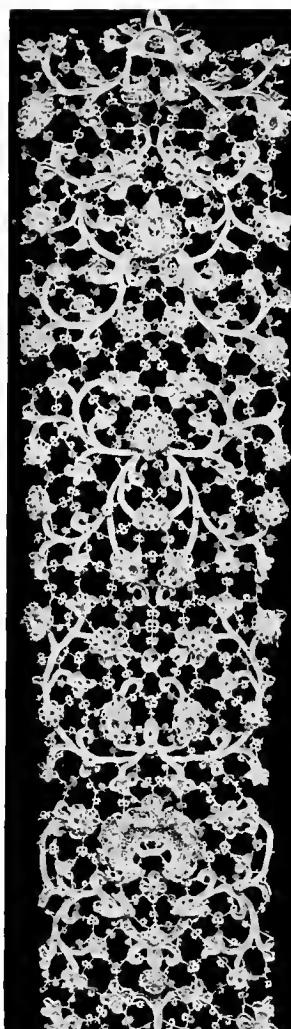
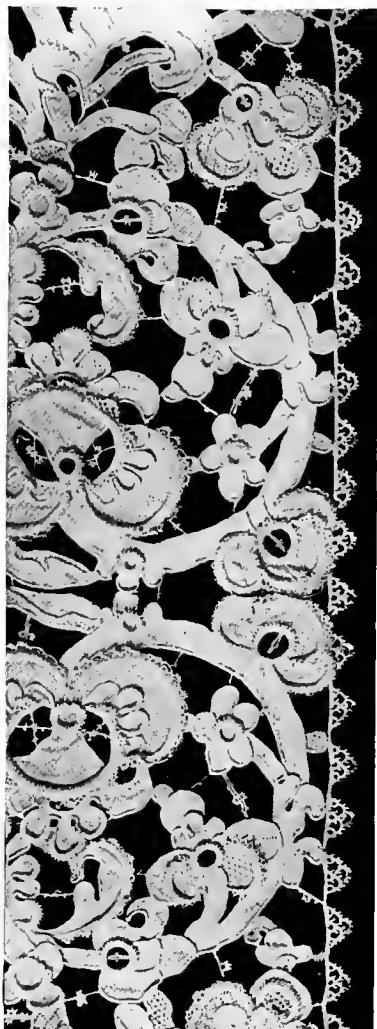
*Item.* She may not dare or presume to wear more than one pound of silver in the shape of garlands and buttons, or in any other way, on the head or shoulders, or otherwise as has been said above; except that besides the said pound of silver she may wear a silver belt of fifteen ounces' weight.

*Item.* She may not dare or presume to wear any slashings, in any robe or dress, neither at the bosom nor at the sleeves, nor to cuffs or collars, larger than the seventh of a yard according to the measure of the yard of the wool-workers, and these slashings shall not be lined with skins either of wild or tame beasts, or with silk, but only with woolen or linen, nor must they be trimmed with fringe either of silk, silver, or gold, or gilt or silvered.

*Item.* She must not wear on her fingers more than three rings in all, and the said rings can have no more than one pearl or precious stone in each, and the said rings must not exceed the weight of silver allowed above.

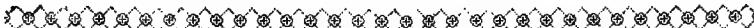
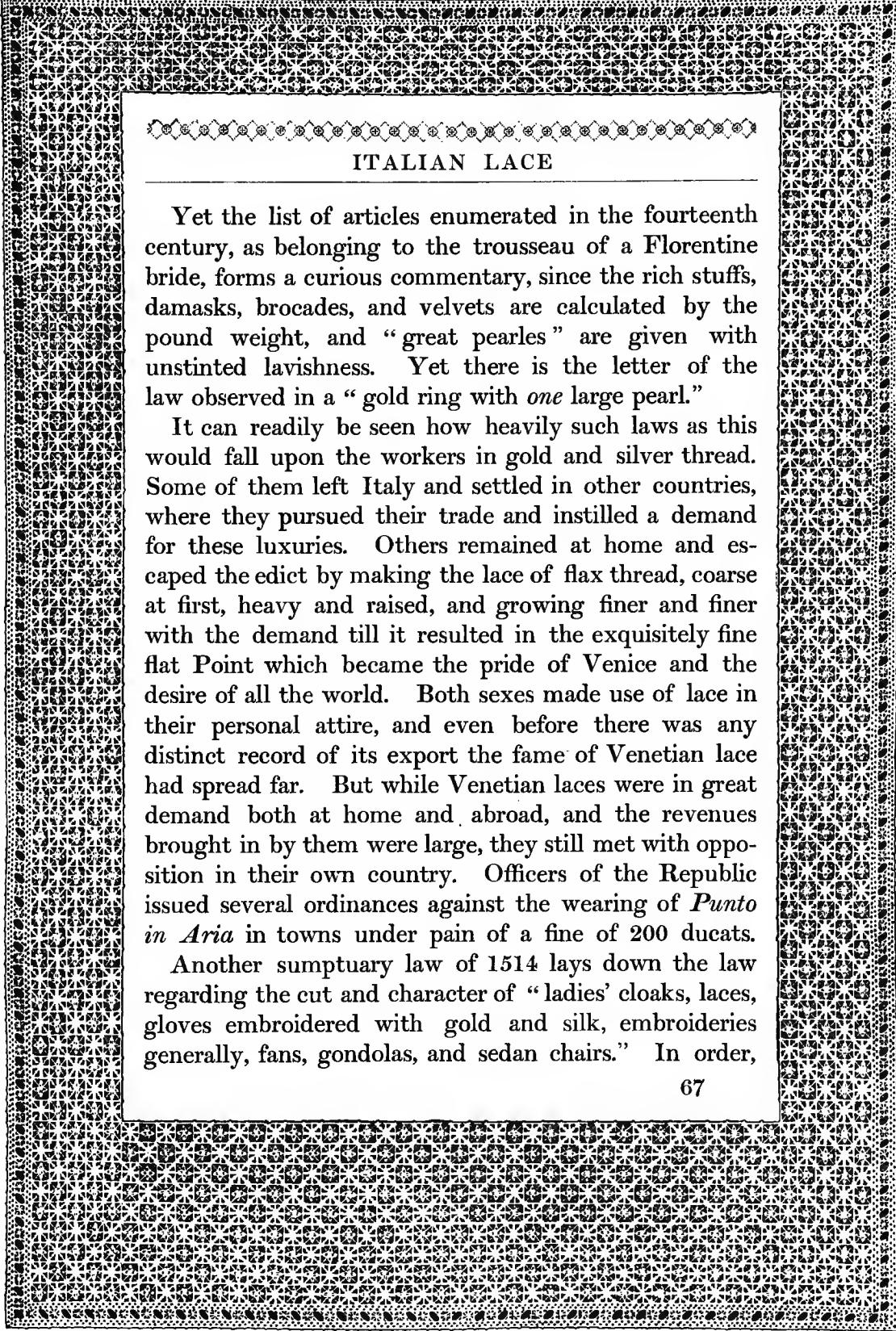
*Item.* No person in the city, suburbs, or district of Florence shall permit himself or presume to give in any way to any woman any kind of collar or buckle, or garland, or brooch of pearls, or of gold, of silver, or of any other precious stone or similar thing, by whatever name it may be called.

*Item.* No individual, tailor, dressmaker, or furrier, shall dare or presume to cut, arrange, or line any of the said scarves, dress or sleeves, prohibited garments, nor make any of the things forbidden by the present law.”



**PLATE XIX.**—*A. Gros Point de Venise. Sixteenth Century. B. Punto tagliato a fogliami. Seventeenth Century. "Rose Point." Both specimens are needle point.*





## ITALIAN LACE

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Yet the list of articles enumerated in the fourteenth century, as belonging to the trousseau of a Florentine bride, forms a curious commentary, since the rich stuffs, damasks, brocades, and velvets are calculated by the pound weight, and "great pearles" are given with unstinted lavishness. Yet there is the letter of the law observed in a "gold ring with *one* large pearl."

It can readily be seen how heavily such laws as this would fall upon the workers in gold and silver thread. Some of them left Italy and settled in other countries, where they pursued their trade and instilled a demand for these luxuries. Others remained at home and escaped the edict by making the lace of flax thread, coarse at first, heavy and raised, and growing finer and finer with the demand till it resulted in the exquisitely fine flat Point which became the pride of Venice and the desire of all the world. Both sexes made use of lace in their personal attire, and even before there was any distinct record of its export the fame of Venetian lace had spread far. But while Venetian laces were in great demand both at home and abroad, and the revenues brought in by them were large, they still met with opposition in their own country. Officers of the Republic issued several ordinances against the wearing of *Punto in Aria* in towns under pain of a fine of 200 ducats.

Another sumptuary law of 1514 lays down the law regarding the cut and character of "ladies' cloaks, laces, gloves embroidered with gold and silk, embroideries generally, fans, gondolas, and sedan chairs." In order,

## THE LACE BOOK

however, that Henry III, King of Navarre, who afterwards became Henry IV of France, might be duly impressed when visiting Venice in 1574, ladies were permitted and even urged to wear all sorts of costumes, jewellery, ornaments, and laces, "even such as were prohibited by the ordinances."

Curiously enough, lace does not appear in the programmes of any of the guilds, yet it was one of the most important industries of Italy. Beside being made in nunneries and secular houses, the great ladies themselves devoted much time and attention to making it. The production of it in private houses continued to the latter part of the seventeenth century, for De la Haye, travelling in Italy, notices that "when the ladies are at home they entertain themselves by making their *Punto in Aria*, which are the *Points de Venise* so much valued in France."

To assist not only the convent workers who had and maintained with pride their own patterns, but others as well, books were brought out containing directions and patterns planned particularly for "noble-minded ladies."

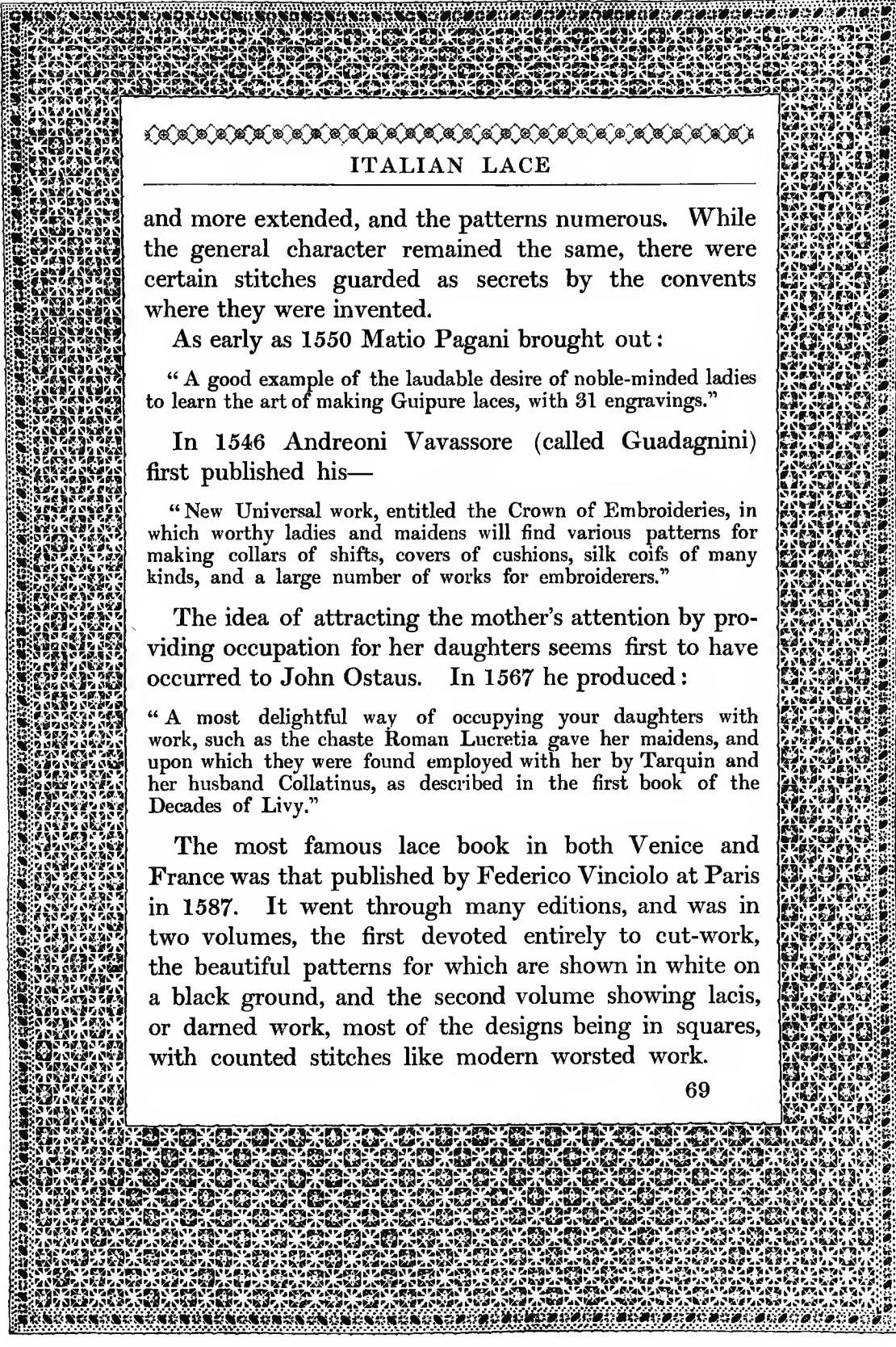
The earliest-dated pattern-book is of 1527, and contains patterns only. It was published at Cologne by O. Foelix. There are, however, undated pattern-books which have come down from monasteries, and they show patterns for edgings of *Reticella* or drawn-work as well as insertions, and so extremely beautiful that they vie in delicacy with the needle point, or *Punto in Aria*.

In 1537 Zoppino published his book of patterns, "ancient and modern." The use of lace became more



**P**LATE XX.—Called “Leader of the choir of Henry IV.” Collar of Gros Point de Venise. Supposed to be by Van Dyck (1599-1641).





## ITALIAN LACE

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and more extended, and the patterns numerous. While the general character remained the same, there were certain stitches guarded as secrets by the convents where they were invented.

As early as 1550 Matio Pagani brought out :

“A good example of the laudable desire of noble-minded ladies to learn the art of making Guipure laces, with 31 engravings.”

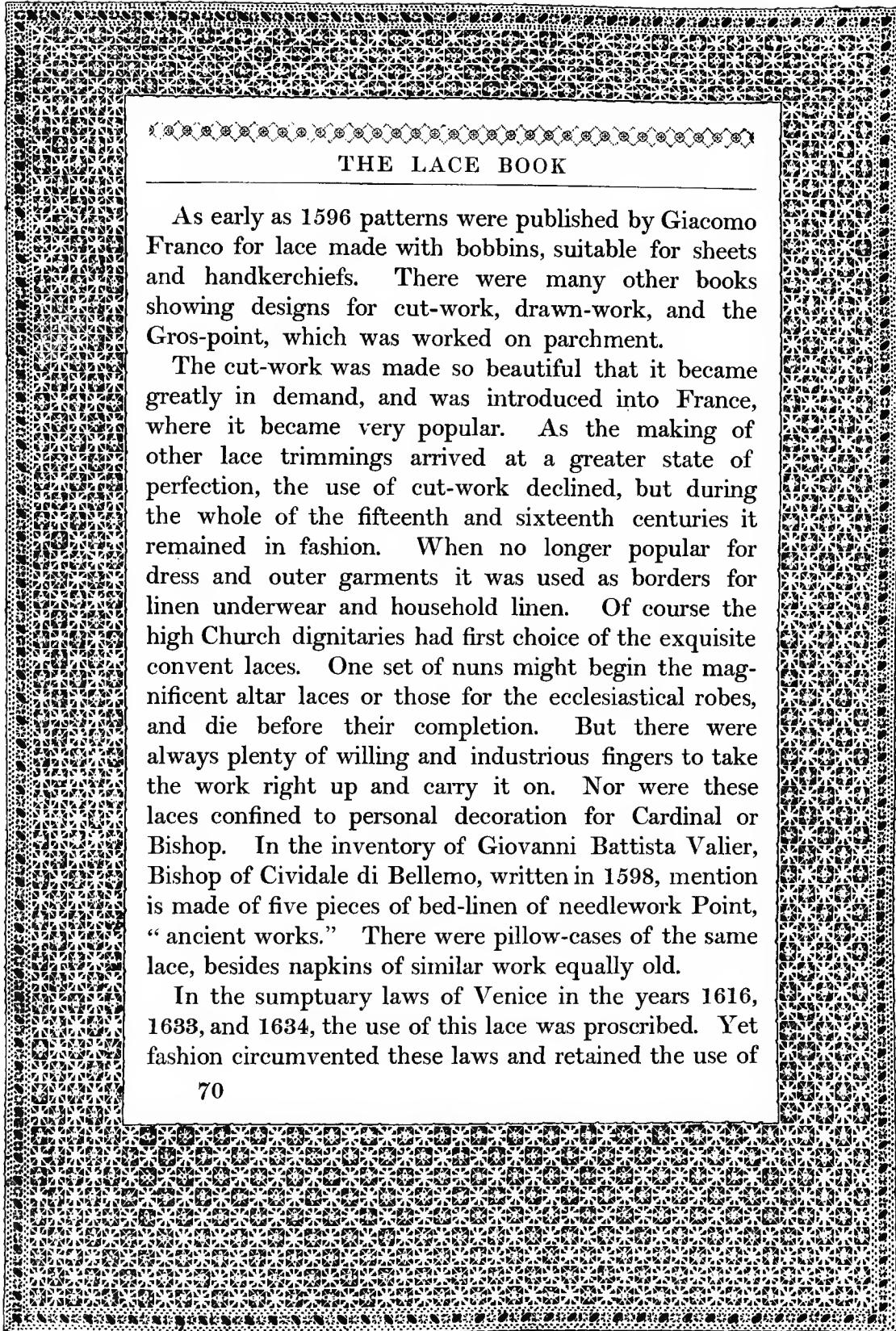
In 1546 Andreoni Vavassore (called Guadagnini) first published his—

“New Universal work, entitled the Crown of Embroideries, in which worthy ladies and maidens will find various patterns for making collars of shifts, covers of cushions, silk coifs of many kinds, and a large number of works for embroiderers.”

The idea of attracting the mother’s attention by providing occupation for her daughters seems first to have occurred to John Ostaus. In 1567 he produced :

“A most delightful way of occupying your daughters with work, such as the chaste Roman Lucretia gave her maidens, and upon which they were found employed with her by Tarquin and her husband Collatinus, as described in the first book of the Decades of Livy.”

The most famous lace book in both Venice and France was that published by Federico Vinciolo at Paris in 1587. It went through many editions, and was in two volumes, the first devoted entirely to cut-work, the beautiful patterns for which are shown in white on a black ground, and the second volume showing lacis, or darned work, most of the designs being in squares, with counted stitches like modern worsted work.



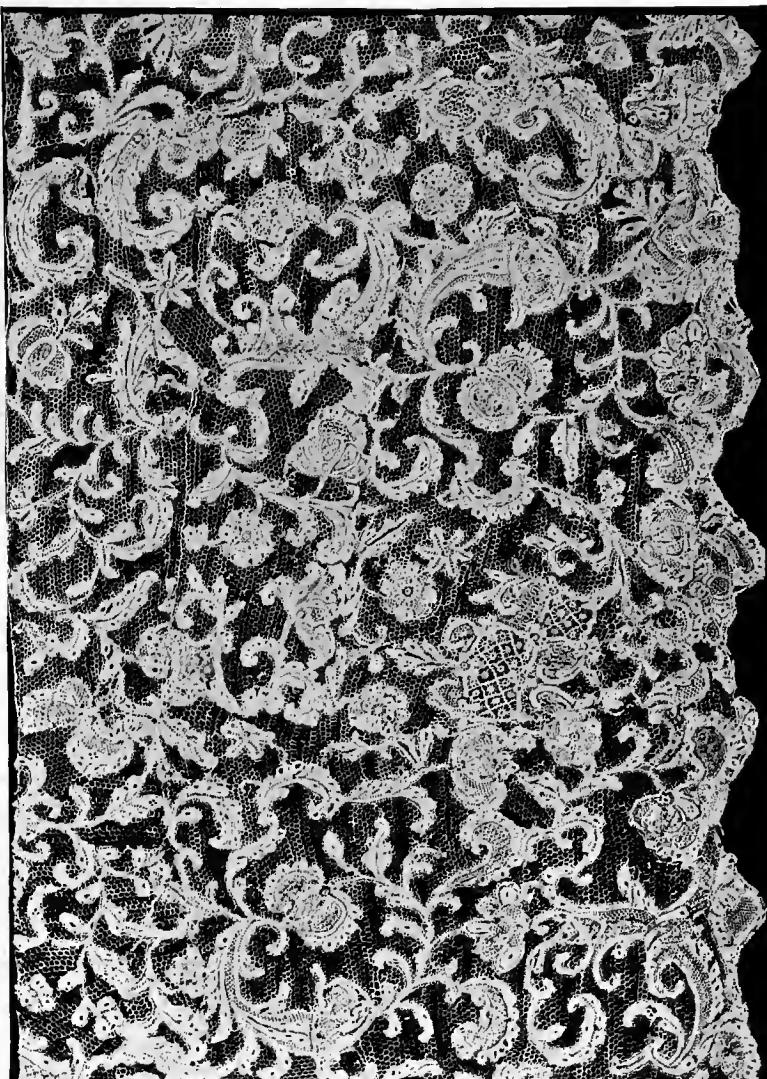
## THE LACE BOOK

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As early as 1596 patterns were published by Giacomo Franco for lace made with bobbins, suitable for sheets and handkerchiefs. There were many other books showing designs for cut-work, drawn-work, and the Gros-point, which was worked on parchment.

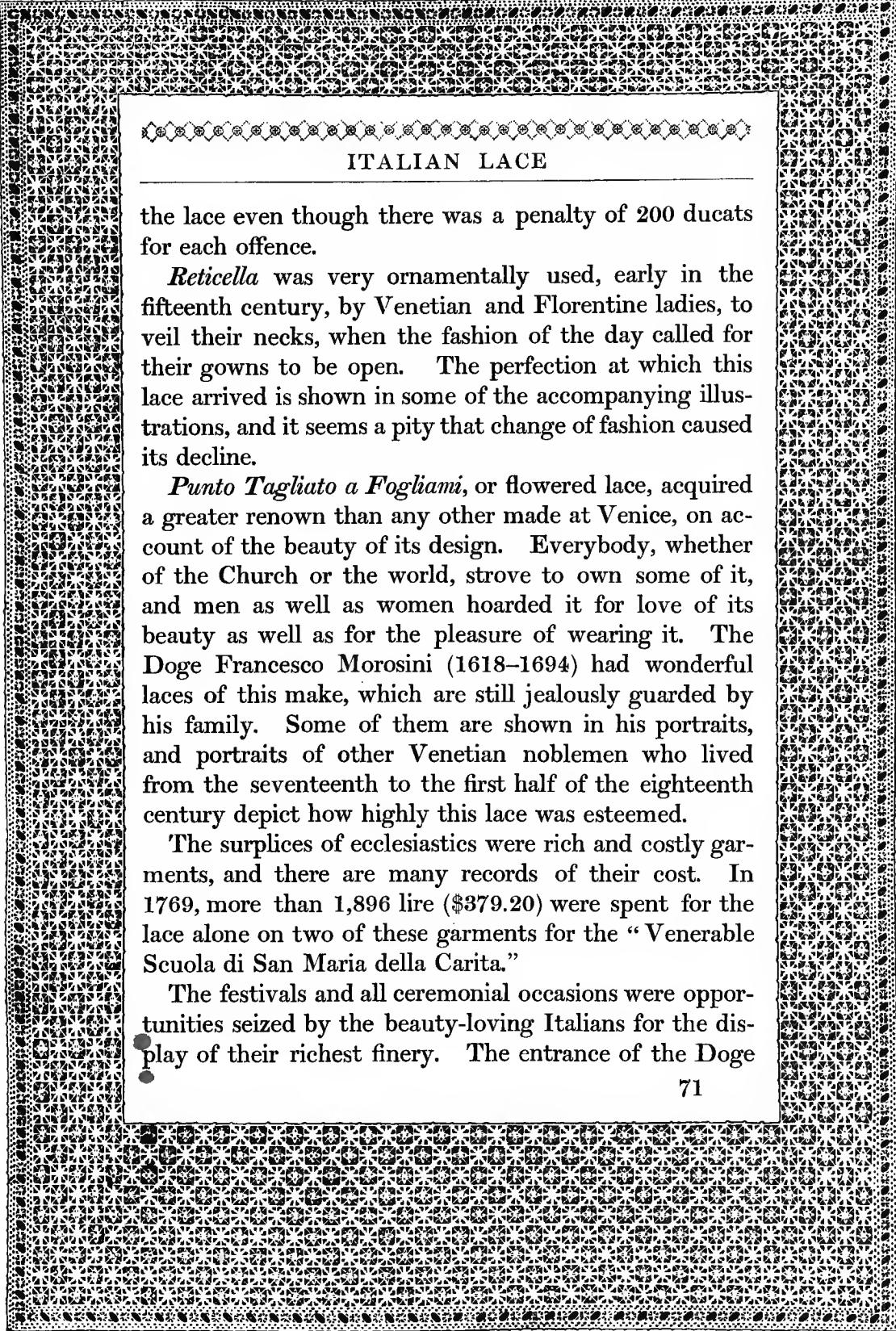
The cut-work was made so beautiful that it became greatly in demand, and was introduced into France, where it became very popular. As the making of other lace trimmings arrived at a greater state of perfection, the use of cut-work declined, but during the whole of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries it remained in fashion. When no longer popular for dress and outer garments it was used as borders for linen underwear and household linen. Of course the high Church dignitaries had first choice of the exquisite convent laces. One set of nuns might begin the magnificent altar laces or those for the ecclesiastical robes, and die before their completion. But there were always plenty of willing and industrious fingers to take the work right up and carry it on. Nor were these laces confined to personal decoration for Cardinal or Bishop. In the inventory of Giovanni Battista Valier, Bishop of Cividale di Bellemo, written in 1598, mention is made of five pieces of bed-linen of needlework Point, "ancient works." There were pillow-cases of the same lace, besides napkins of similar work equally old.

In the sumptuary laws of Venice in the years 1616, 1633, and 1634, the use of this lace was proscribed. Yet fashion circumvented these laws and retained the use of



**P**LATE XXI.—*Point de Venise à Réseau.*  
*Needle-point lace. Seventeenth Century.*





## ITALIAN LACE

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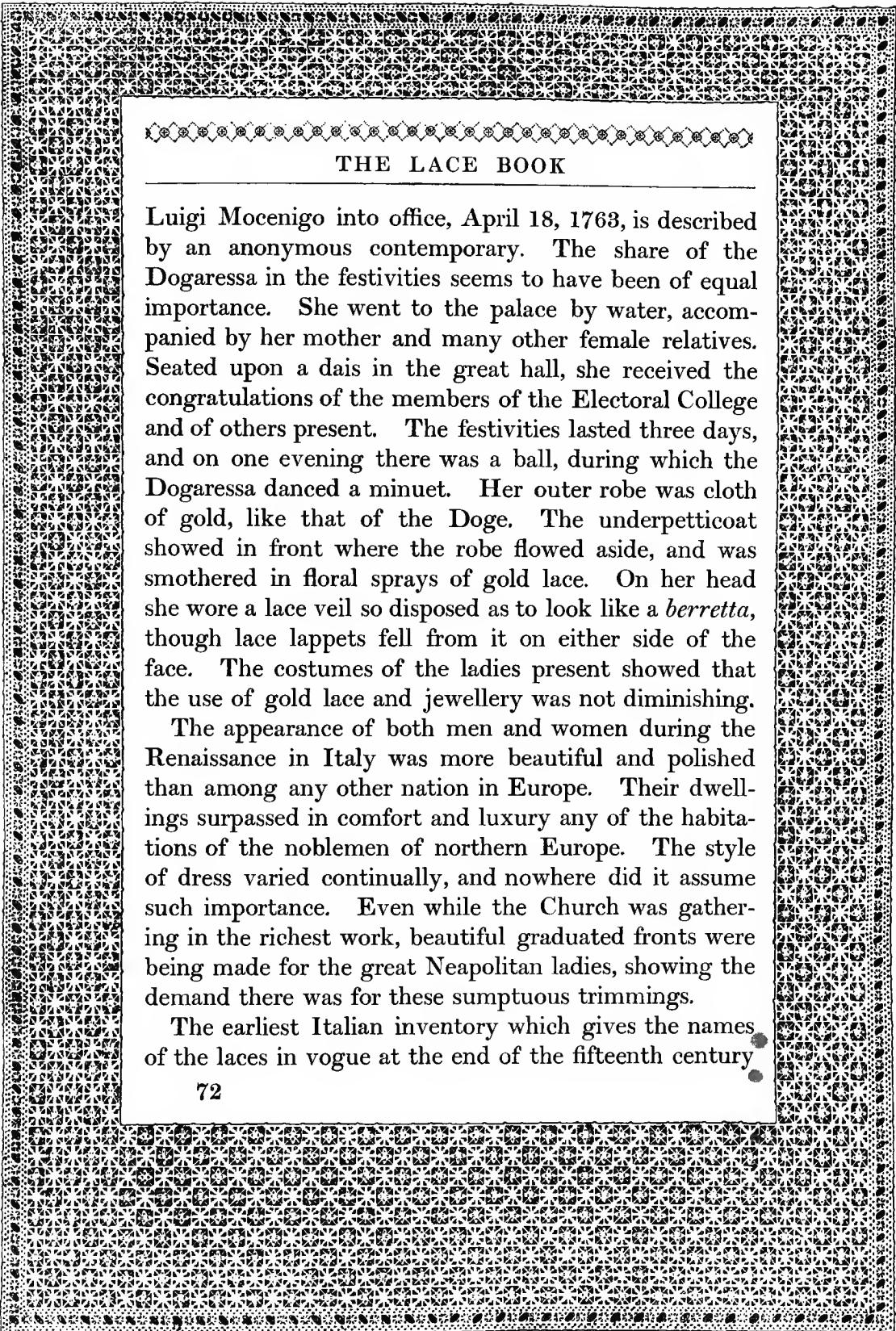
the lace even though there was a penalty of 200 ducats for each offence.

*Reticella* was very ornamentally used, early in the fifteenth century, by Venetian and Florentine ladies, to veil their necks, when the fashion of the day called for their gowns to be open. The perfection at which this lace arrived is shown in some of the accompanying illustrations, and it seems a pity that change of fashion caused its decline.

*Punto Tagliato a Fogliami*, or flowered lace, acquired a greater renown than any other made at Venice, on account of the beauty of its design. Everybody, whether of the Church or the world, strove to own some of it, and men as well as women hoarded it for love of its beauty as well as for the pleasure of wearing it. The Doge Francesco Morosini (1618-1694) had wonderful laces of this make, which are still jealously guarded by his family. Some of them are shown in his portraits, and portraits of other Venetian noblemen who lived from the seventeenth to the first half of the eighteenth century depict how highly this lace was esteemed.

The surplices of ecclesiastics were rich and costly garments, and there are many records of their cost. In 1769, more than 1,896 lire (\$379.20) were spent for the lace alone on two of these garments for the "Venerable Scuola di San Maria della Carita."

The festivals and all ceremonial occasions were opportunities seized by the beauty-loving Italians for the display of their richest finery. The entrance of the Doge



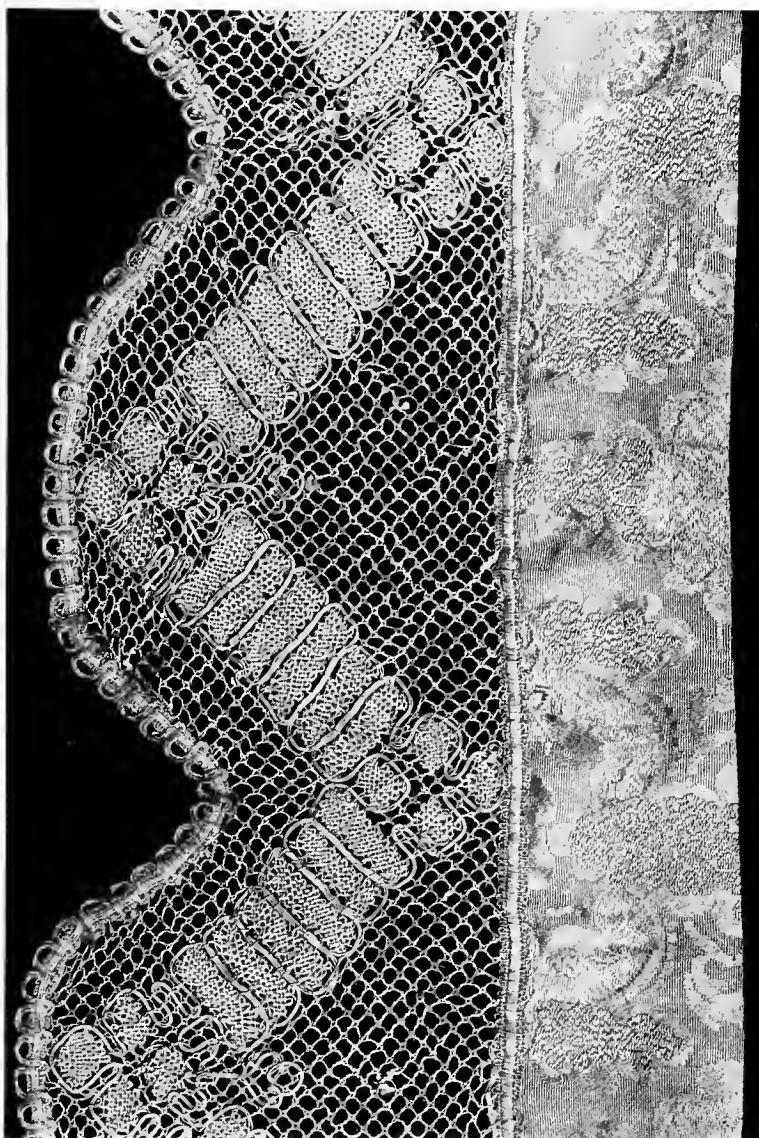
## THE LACE BOOK

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Luigi Mocenigo into office, April 18, 1763, is described by an anonymous contemporary. The share of the Dogaressa in the festivities seems to have been of equal importance. She went to the palace by water, accompanied by her mother and many other female relatives. Seated upon a dais in the great hall, she received the congratulations of the members of the Electoral College and of others present. The festivities lasted three days, and on one evening there was a ball, during which the Dogaressa danced a minuet. Her outer robe was cloth of gold, like that of the Doge. The underpetticoat showed in front where the robe flowed aside, and was smothered in floral sprays of gold lace. On her head she wore a lace veil so disposed as to look like a *berretta*, though lace lappets fell from it on either side of the face. The costumes of the ladies present showed that the use of gold lace and jewellery was not diminishing.

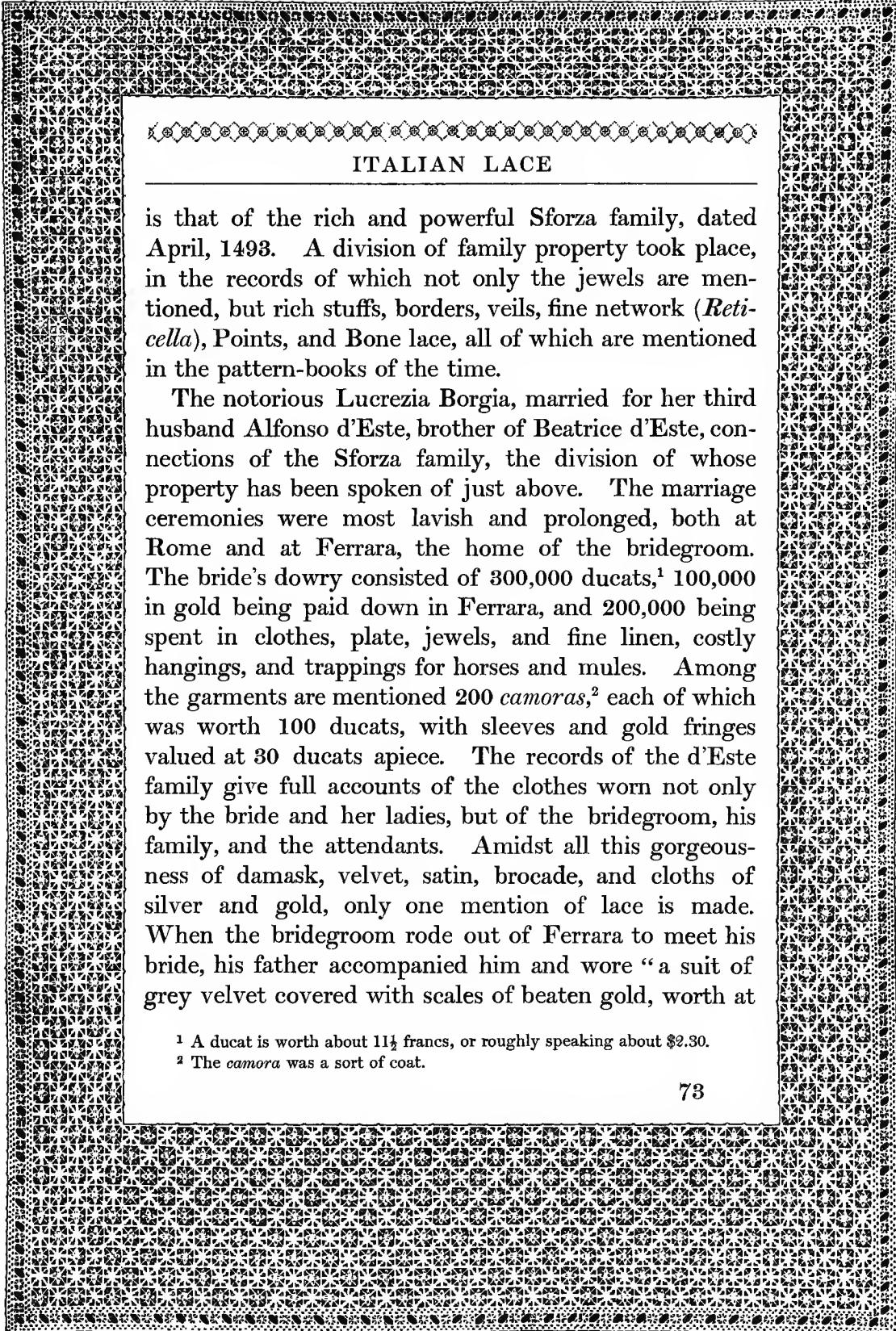
The appearance of both men and women during the Renaissance in Italy was more beautiful and polished than among any other nation in Europe. Their dwellings surpassed in comfort and luxury any of the habitations of the noblemen of northern Europe. The style of dress varied continually, and nowhere did it assume such importance. Even while the Church was gathering in the richest work, beautiful graduated fronts were being made for the great Neapolitan ladies, showing the demand there was for these sumptuous trimmings.

The earliest Italian inventory which gives the names of the laces in vogue at the end of the fifteenth century



**P**LATE XXII.—Gold lace edging robe of damask. Sixteenth Century. Italian, bobbin-made.





## ITALIAN LACE

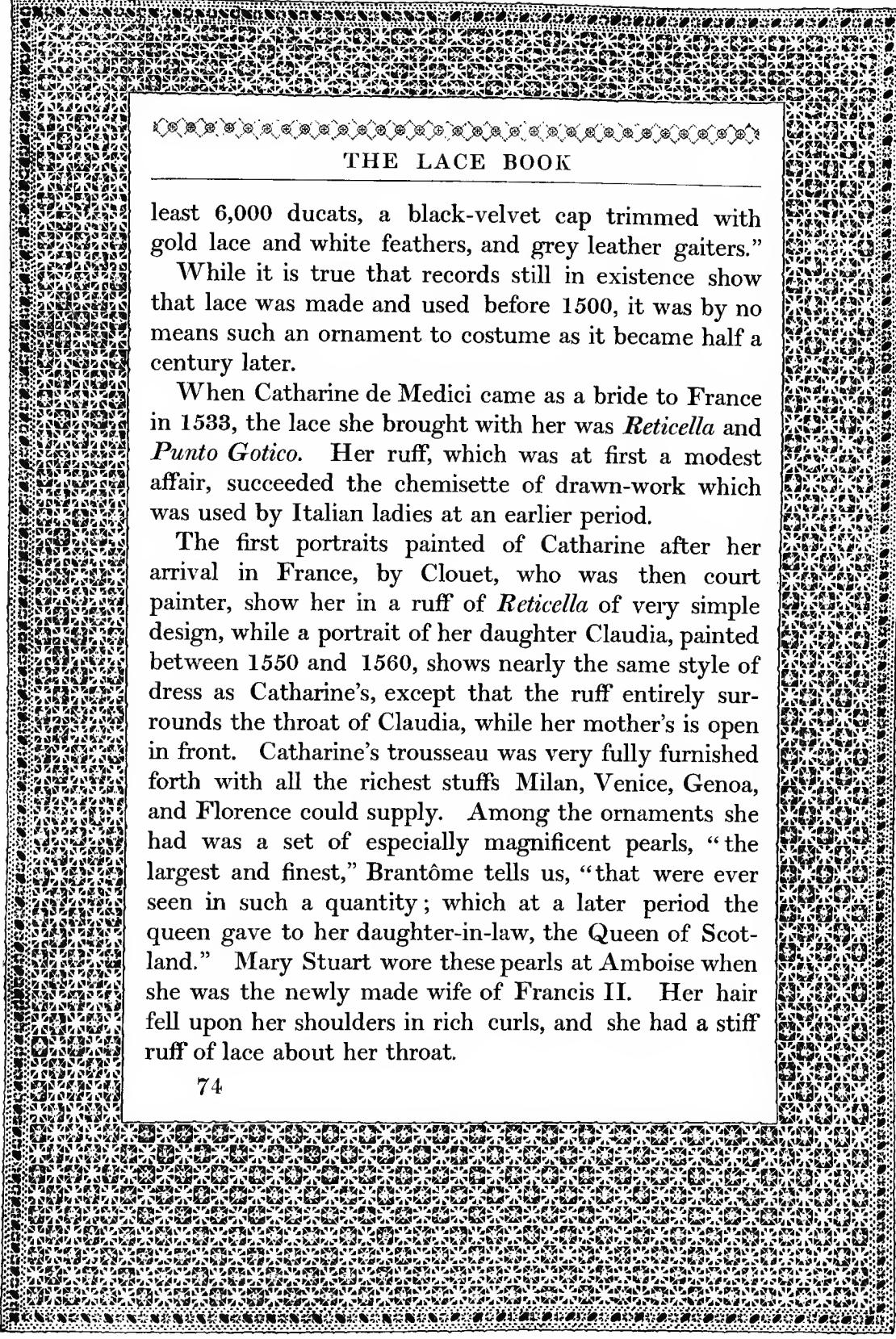
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is that of the rich and powerful Sforza family, dated April, 1493. A division of family property took place, in the records of which not only the jewels are mentioned, but rich stuffs, borders, veils, fine network (*Reticella*), Points, and Bone lace, all of which are mentioned in the pattern-books of the time.

The notorious Lucrezia Borgia, married for her third husband Alfonso d'Este, brother of Beatrice d'Este, connections of the Sforza family, the division of whose property has been spoken of just above. The marriage ceremonies were most lavish and prolonged, both at Rome and at Ferrara, the home of the bridegroom. The bride's dowry consisted of 300,000 ducats,<sup>1</sup> 100,000 in gold being paid down in Ferrara, and 200,000 being spent in clothes, plate, jewels, and fine linen, costly hangings, and trappings for horses and mules. Among the garments are mentioned 200 *camoras*,<sup>2</sup> each of which was worth 100 ducats, with sleeves and gold fringes valued at 30 ducats apiece. The records of the d'Este family give full accounts of the clothes worn not only by the bride and her ladies, but of the bridegroom, his family, and the attendants. Amidst all this gorgeousness of damask, velvet, satin, brocade, and cloths of silver and gold, only one mention of lace is made. When the bridegroom rode out of Ferrara to meet his bride, his father accompanied him and wore "a suit of grey velvet covered with scales of beaten gold, worth at

<sup>1</sup> A ducat is worth about 11½ francs, or roughly speaking about \$2.30.

<sup>2</sup> The *camora* was a sort of coat.



## THE LACE BOOK

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least 6,000 ducats, a black-velvet cap trimmed with gold lace and white feathers, and grey leather gaiters."

While it is true that records still in existence show that lace was made and used before 1500, it was by no means such an ornament to costume as it became half a century later.

When Catharine de Medici came as a bride to France in 1533, the lace she brought with her was *Reticella* and *Punto Gotico*. Her ruff, which was at first a modest affair, succeeded the chemisette of drawn-work which was used by Italian ladies at an earlier period.

The first portraits painted of Catharine after her arrival in France, by Clouet, who was then court painter, show her in a ruff of *Reticella* of very simple design, while a portrait of her daughter Claudia, painted between 1550 and 1560, shows nearly the same style of dress as Catharine's, except that the ruff entirely surrounds the throat of Claudia, while her mother's is open in front. Catharine's trousseau was very fully furnished forth with all the richest stuffs Milan, Venice, Genoa, and Florence could supply. Among the ornaments she had was a set of especially magnificent pearls, "the largest and finest," Brantôme tells us, "that were ever seen in such a quantity; which at a later period the queen gave to her daughter-in-law, the Queen of Scotland." Mary Stuart wore these pearls at Amboise when she was the newly made wife of Francis II. Her hair fell upon her shoulders in rich curls, and she had a stiff ruff of lace about her throat.



**PLATE XXIII.**—Thomas Francis Carignan of Savoy. He wears collar and cuffs of needle point, “Van Dyck style,” 1634. Portrait by Van Dyck.



## ITALIAN LACE

Nor were the ladies the only ones who changed the fashions of their garments radically and often. The splendid gorget ruffs of *Punto Gotico* were succeeded by the square collar bands and edgings, or by the collar wholly composed of the costly *Gros Point de Venise*.

The portrait of Francis Carignan, Prince of Savoy, painted in 1634, shows the Van Dyck Point in the height of its beauty and in the richest Venetian Point. Points were succeeded by lace with a straight edge, which was made in the most beautiful patterns of flowered laces (*punto tagliato a fogliami*) about 1664, both in Italy and France.

The fashion for wearing it was straight about the corsage, which displayed its beauty to the best possible advantage, and also threw into relief the lovely shoulders it encircled.

Fortunately for us, the dark-eyed beauties of Italy still live on the immortal canvases of her painters, and present a picture vivid almost to reality of those splendid days which we have learned to call "the Golden Age of Italy."

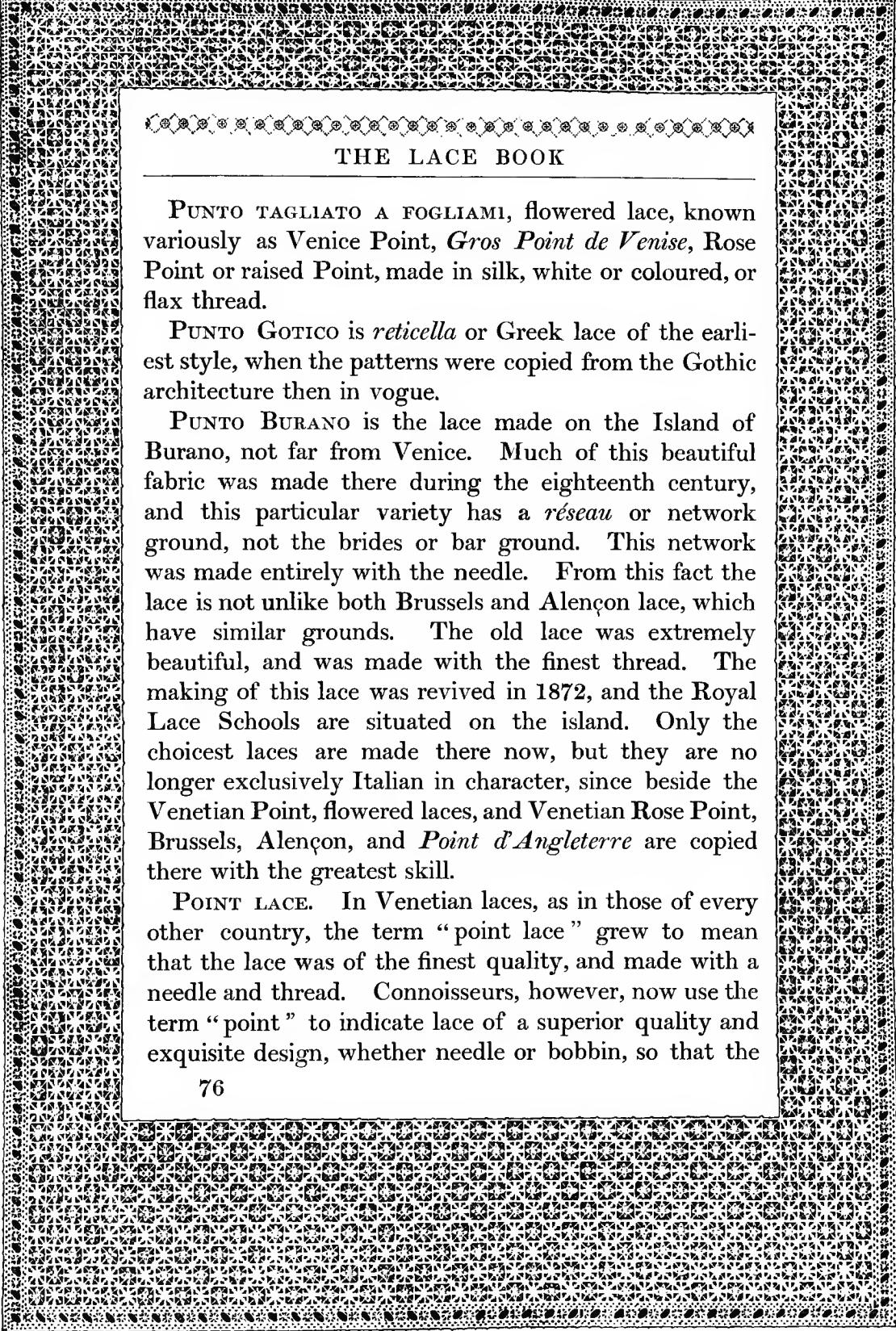
### *Reference List of Italian Laces*

PUNTO TAGLIATO, cut-work.

PUNTO TIRATO, drawn-work combined with cut-work.

PUNTO A RETICELLA, Greek lace, or drawn-work afterward worked with a needle in bands or points.

PUNTO IN ARIA, "points in air," having no foundation of either cut- or drawn-work.



## THE LACE BOOK

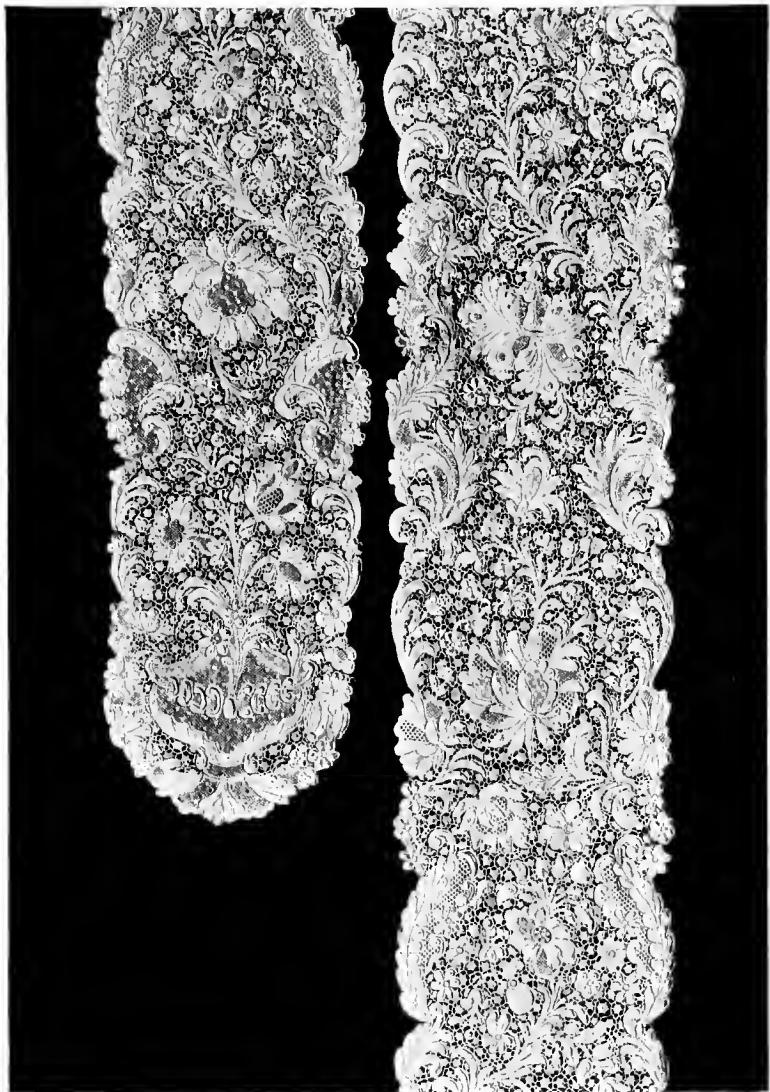
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PUNTO TAGLIATO A FOGLIAMI, flowered lace, known variously as Venice Point, *Gros Point de Venise*, Rose Point or raised Point, made in silk, white or coloured, or flax thread.

PUNTO GOTICO is *reticella* or Greek lace of the earliest style, when the patterns were copied from the Gothic architecture then in vogue.

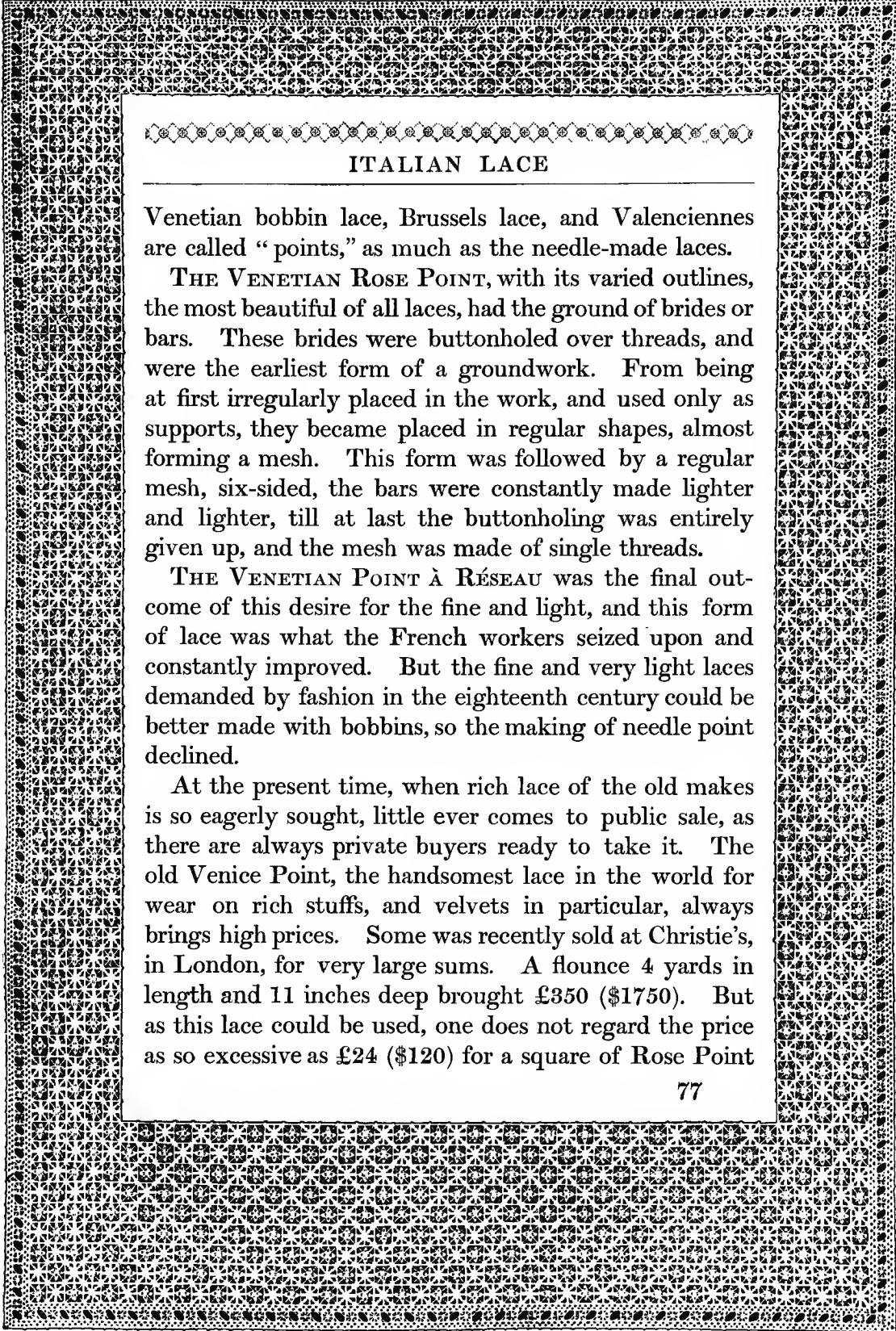
PUNTO BURANO is the lace made on the Island of Burano, not far from Venice. Much of this beautiful fabric was made there during the eighteenth century, and this particular variety has a *réseau* or network ground, not the brides or bar ground. This network was made entirely with the needle. From this fact the lace is not unlike both Brussels and Alençon lace, which have similar grounds. The old lace was extremely beautiful, and was made with the finest thread. The making of this lace was revived in 1872, and the Royal Lace Schools are situated on the island. Only the choicest laces are made there now, but they are no longer exclusively Italian in character, since beside the Venetian Point, flowered laces, and Venetian Rose Point, Brussels, Alençon, and *Point d'Angleterre* are copied there with the greatest skill.

POINT LACE. In Venetian laces, as in those of every other country, the term "point lace" grew to mean that the lace was of the finest quality, and made with a needle and thread. Connoisseurs, however, now use the term "point" to indicate lace of a superior quality and exquisite design, whether needle or bobbin, so that the



**P**LATE XXIV.—Italian bobbin-made lappet,  
showing “snowy ground.” Eighteenth Century.





## ITALIAN LACE

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Venetian bobbin lace, Brussels lace, and Valenciennes are called "points," as much as the needle-made laces.

THE VENETIAN ROSE POINT, with its varied outlines, the most beautiful of all laces, had the ground of brides or bars. These brides were buttonholed over threads, and were the earliest form of a groundwork. From being at first irregularly placed in the work, and used only as supports, they became placed in regular shapes, almost forming a mesh. This form was followed by a regular mesh, six-sided, the bars were constantly made lighter and lighter, till at last the buttonholing was entirely given up, and the mesh was made of single threads.

THE VENETIAN POINT À RÉSEAU was the final outcome of this desire for the fine and light, and this form of lace was what the French workers seized upon and constantly improved. But the fine and very light laces demanded by fashion in the eighteenth century could be better made with bobbins, so the making of needle point declined.

At the present time, when rich lace of the old makes is so eagerly sought, little ever comes to public sale, as there are always private buyers ready to take it. The old Venice Point, the handsomest lace in the world for wear on rich stuffs, and velvets in particular, always brings high prices. Some was recently sold at Christie's, in London, for very large sums. A flounce 4 yards in length and 11 inches deep brought £350 (\$1750). But as this lace could be used, one does not regard the price as so excessive as £24 (\$120) for a square of Rose Point

## THE LACE BOOK

measuring but 25 inches, and of use only as a cabinet specimen.

The first-mentioned piece, the flounce, was interesting from the fact that the pattern showed not only fine arabesque curves, but figures ; animals and birds were introduced as well, placing its manufacture in the sixteenth century.

Still another length of Rose Point,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide and 5 yards and 21 inches long fetched the large sum of £15 (\$75) a yard.

Some panels for dress fronts were sold at the same time, the design conforming to the shape of the panel, some only 4 inches wide by 20 inches long bringing as much as £19 (\$95), while one 20 inches wide and 43 inches long brought £38 (\$190).

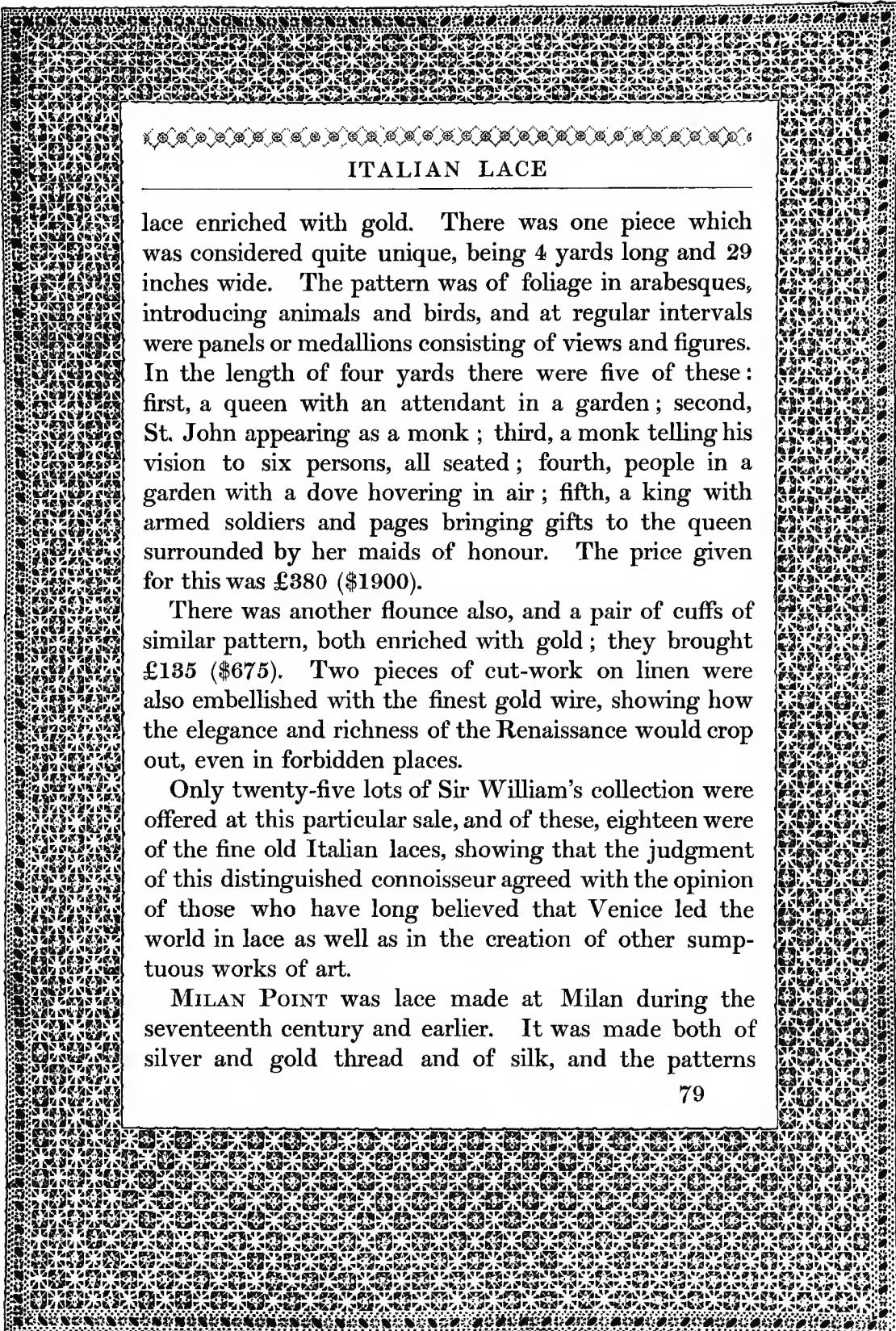
Some splendid fichus of Rose Point and Gros Point brought from £38 (\$190) to £150 (\$750), and a small cap-crown had many bidders and was finally knocked down for £4 10s. (\$22.50). These prices seem exceedingly high, yet it must be remembered that these Venetian Points are so solidly and beautifully made that they do not wear out or tear like the more fragile French laces, or like the Venetian *Points à Réseau*.

Even after the severe sumptuary laws of Italy forbade the making and wearing of gold and silver lace, threads of these metals were woven or embroidered into flax thread laces for their further enrichment. The collection of laces belonging to Sir William Drake, and mentioned elsewhere, was exceedingly rich in specimens of thread



**P**LATE XXV.—*Italian bobbin-made flounce,  
twenty-two inches wide. Seventeenth Century.*  
*Photograph by Charles Balliard.*





## ITALIAN LACE

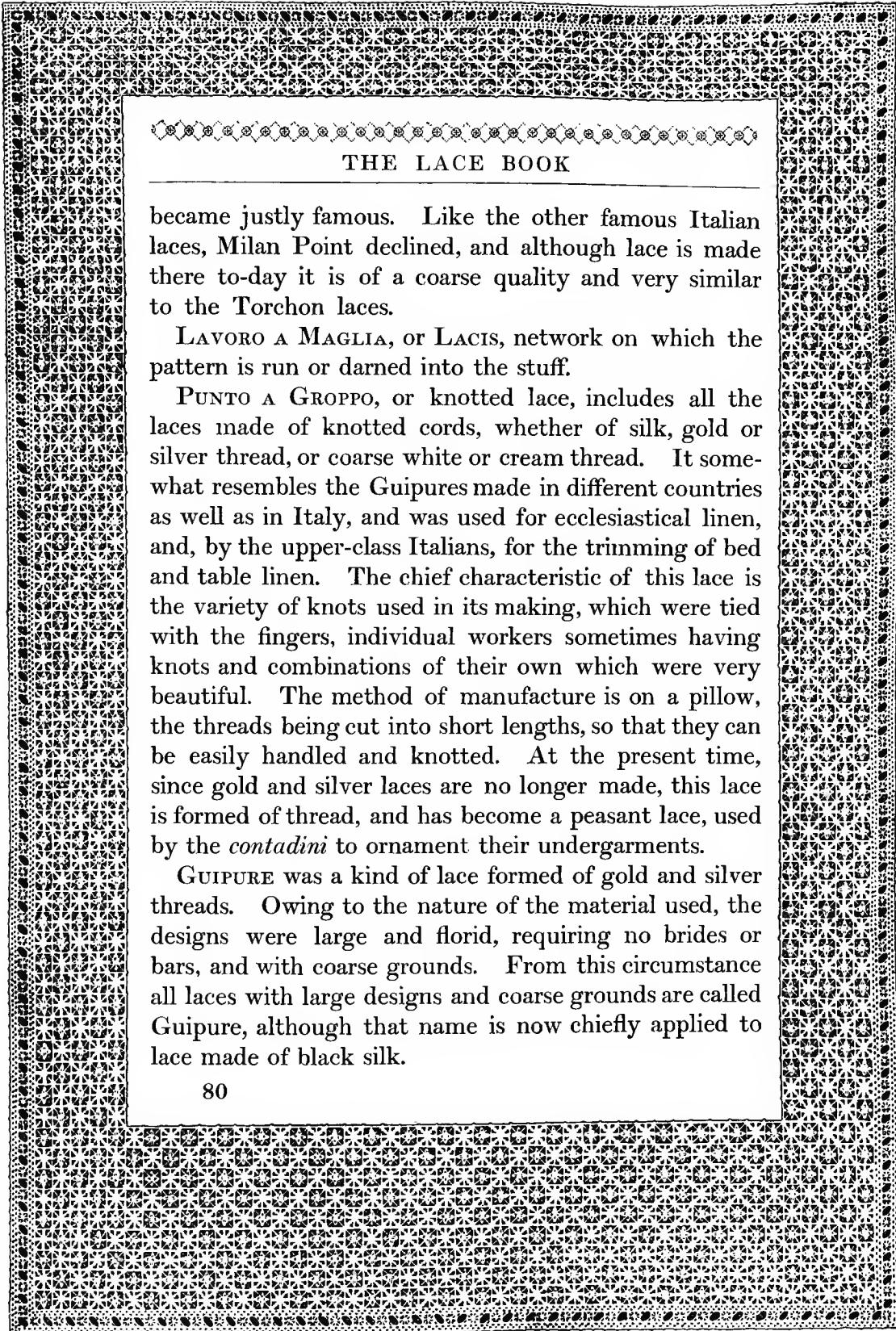
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lace enriched with gold. There was one piece which was considered quite unique, being 4 yards long and 29 inches wide. The pattern was of foliage in arabesques, introducing animals and birds, and at regular intervals were panels or medallions consisting of views and figures. In the length of four yards there were five of these: first, a queen with an attendant in a garden; second, St. John appearing as a monk; third, a monk telling his vision to six persons, all seated; fourth, people in a garden with a dove hovering in air; fifth, a king with armed soldiers and pages bringing gifts to the queen surrounded by her maids of honour. The price given for this was £380 (\$1900).

There was another flounce also, and a pair of cuffs of similar pattern, both enriched with gold; they brought £135 (\$675). Two pieces of cut-work on linen were also embellished with the finest gold wire, showing how the elegance and richness of the Renaissance would crop out, even in forbidden places.

Only twenty-five lots of Sir William's collection were offered at this particular sale, and of these, eighteen were of the fine old Italian laces, showing that the judgment of this distinguished connoisseur agreed with the opinion of those who have long believed that Venice led the world in lace as well as in the creation of other sumptuous works of art.

MILAN POINT was lace made at Milan during the seventeenth century and earlier. It was made both of silver and gold thread and of silk, and the patterns



## THE LACE BOOK

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became justly famous. Like the other famous Italian laces, Milan Point declined, and although lace is made there to-day it is of a coarse quality and very similar to the Torchon laces.

**LAVORO A MAGLIA**, or **LACIS**, network on which the pattern is run or darned into the stuff.

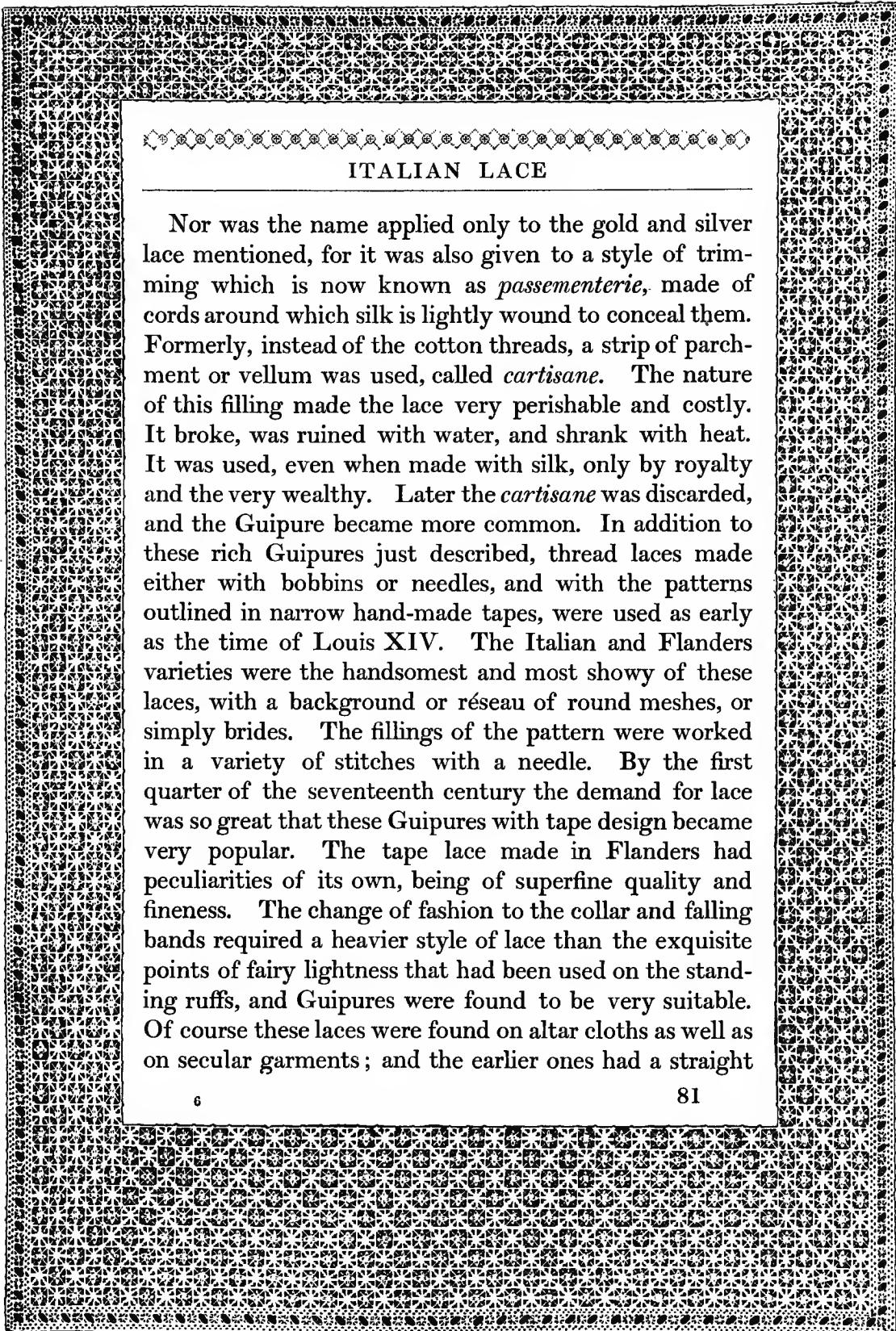
**PUNTO A GROPPPO**, or knotted lace, includes all the laces made of knotted cords, whether of silk, gold or silver thread, or coarse white or cream thread. It somewhat resembles the Guipures made in different countries as well as in Italy, and was used for ecclesiastical linen, and, by the upper-class Italians, for the trimming of bed and table linen. The chief characteristic of this lace is the variety of knots used in its making, which were tied with the fingers, individual workers sometimes having knots and combinations of their own which were very beautiful. The method of manufacture is on a pillow, the threads being cut into short lengths, so that they can be easily handled and knotted. At the present time, since gold and silver laces are no longer made, this lace is formed of thread, and has become a peasant lace, used by the *contadini* to ornament their undergarments.

**GUIPURE** was a kind of lace formed of gold and silver threads. Owing to the nature of the material used, the designs were large and florid, requiring no brides or bars, and with coarse grounds. From this circumstance all laces with large designs and coarse grounds are called Guipure, although that name is now chiefly applied to lace made of black silk.



**P**LATE XXVI.—*Marie de Medici (1573-1642).*  
*Standing ruff of superb Point de Venise.*  
*Portrait by Scipione.*





## ITALIAN LACE

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Nor was the name applied only to the gold and silver lace mentioned, for it was also given to a style of trimming which is now known as *passementerie*, made of cords around which silk is lightly wound to conceal them. Formerly, instead of the cotton threads, a strip of parchment or vellum was used, called *cartisane*. The nature of this filling made the lace very perishable and costly. It broke, was ruined with water, and shrank with heat. It was used, even when made with silk, only by royalty and the very wealthy. Later the *cartisane* was discarded, and the Guipure became more common. In addition to these rich Guipures just described, thread laces made either with bobbins or needles, and with the patterns outlined in narrow hand-made tapes, were used as early as the time of Louis XIV. The Italian and Flanders varieties were the handsomest and most showy of these laces, with a background or *réseau* of round meshes, or simply brides. The fillings of the pattern were worked in a variety of stitches with a needle. By the first quarter of the seventeenth century the demand for lace was so great that these Guipures with tape design became very popular. The tape lace made in Flanders had peculiarities of its own, being of superfine quality and fineness. The change of fashion to the collar and falling bands required a heavier style of lace than the exquisite points of fairy lightness that had been used on the standing ruffs, and Guipures were found to be very suitable. Of course these laces were found on altar cloths as well as on secular garments; and the earlier ones had a straight

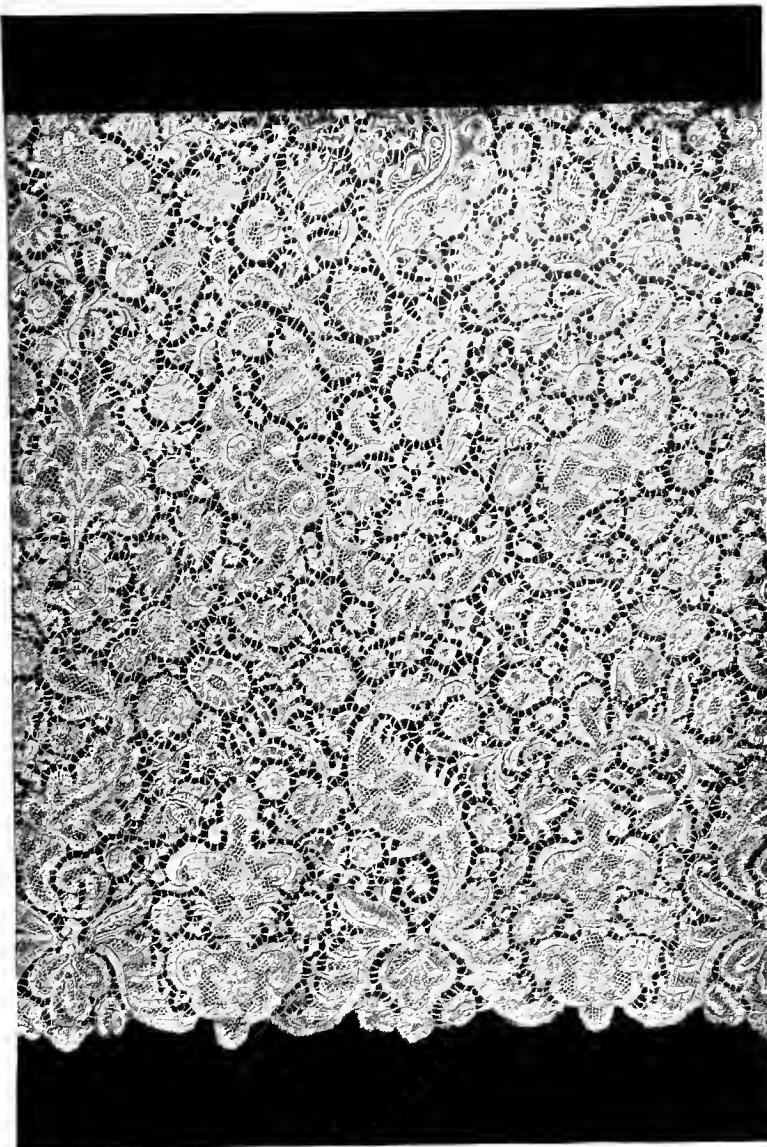
## THE LACE BOOK

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edge, while the later ones had a clover-leaf edge, which made it a little heavier. These tape Guipures are still made in Italy, of handsome design, but lacking the charming irregularity of the old patterns and hand-made tapes.

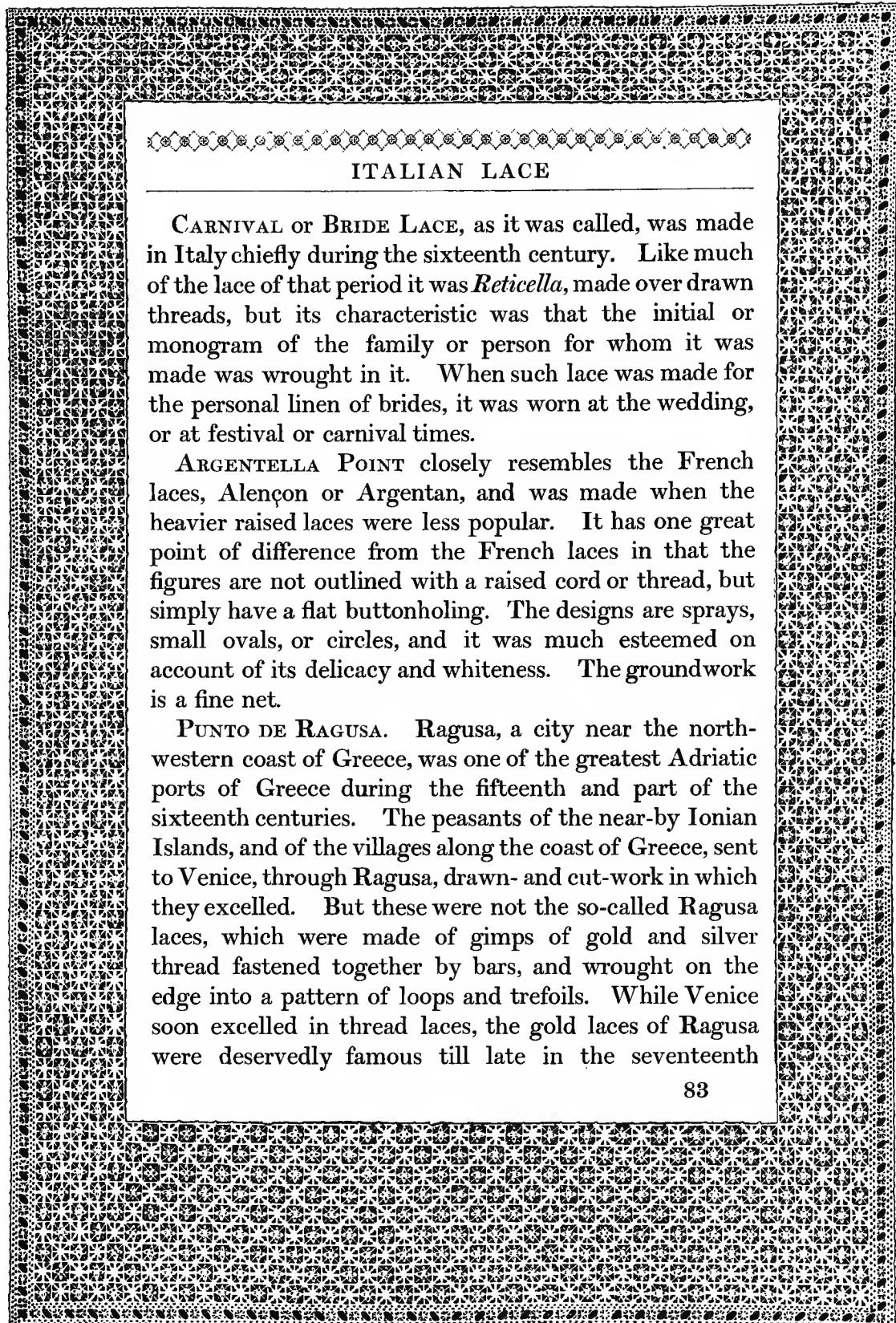
**GENOA LACE.** The rich old city of Genoa was famous for its lace as well as for its gold work and jewellery. Perhaps it was on account of the number of goldsmiths that Genoa was among the first countries to make a sumptuous trimming made of slender wires of both silver and gold. They made this lace-like material in small quantities late in the fourteenth century. So popular was it that Venice followed suit and made it also ; but it was not until several hundred years later that Genoese Points became well known and in demand all over Europe. Few of the inventories of royalty fail to mention *Point de Gênes*, and Marie de Medici had much of it ; but these laces were of silk or thread, since the Genoese Republic had made sumptuary laws regulating the wearing of gold and silver lace, as did the other Italian cities.

While Venice held the palm for needle-point laces, Genoa was unrivalled for her bobbin lace, although she made needle point also. But the exquisite pillow-made fichus, collars, kerchiefs, and even aprons were universally sought, and more in demand than edging lace. Pieces like this necessitated the use of very large pillows, and each pillow required four workers to attend to the 700 or 800 bobbins used. The lace now made in Genoa is a sort of Guipure, and is sold in France.



**P**LATE XXVII.—Bobbin-made lace flounce with brides. Made at Lucca. Seventeenth Century.





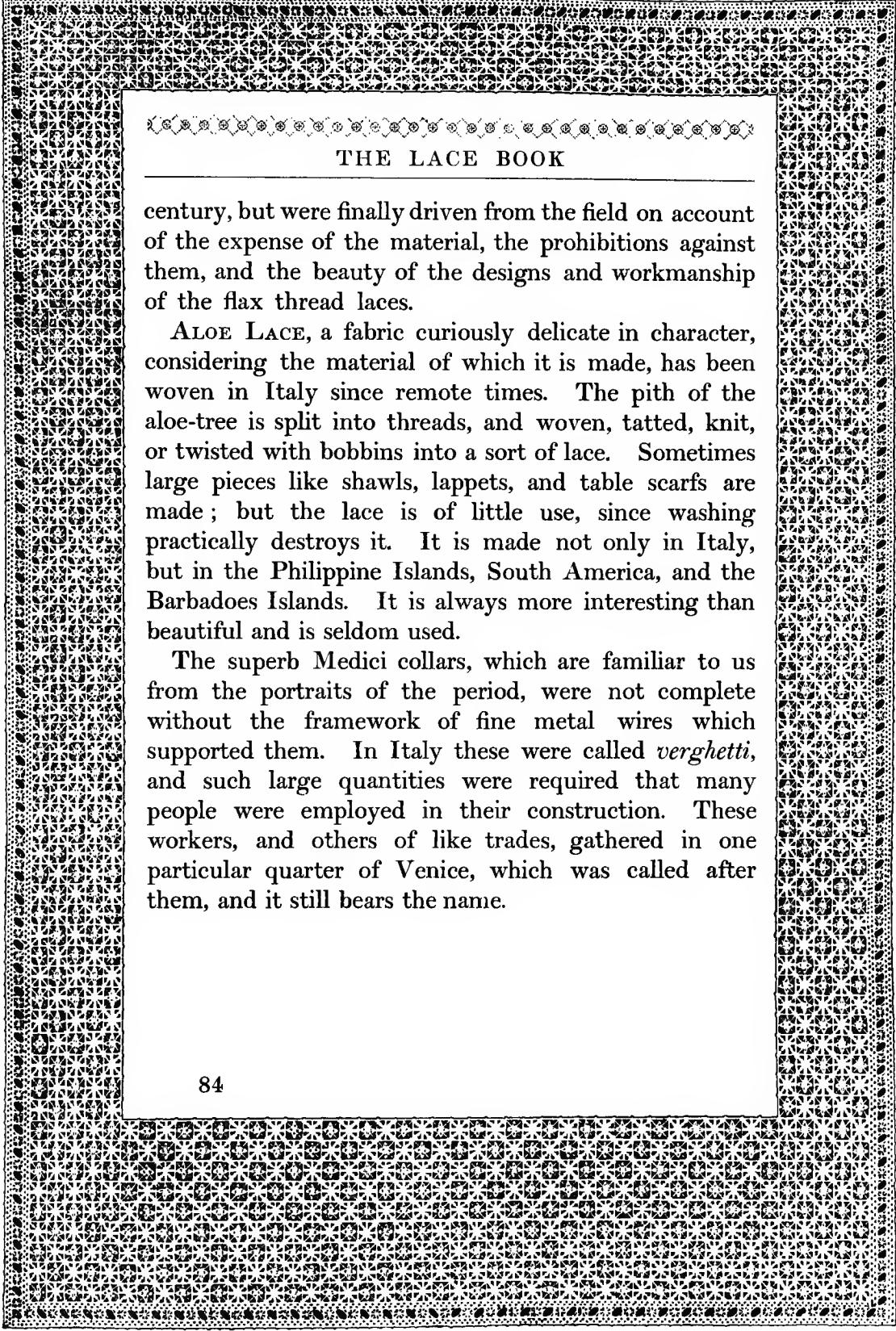
## ITALIAN LACE

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CARNIVAL or BRIDE LACE, as it was called, was made in Italy chiefly during the sixteenth century. Like much of the lace of that period it was *Reticella*, made over drawn threads, but its characteristic was that the initial or monogram of the family or person for whom it was made was wrought in it. When such lace was made for the personal linen of brides, it was worn at the wedding, or at festival or carnival times.

ARGENTELLA POINT closely resembles the French laces, *Alençon* or *Argentan*, and was made when the heavier raised laces were less popular. It has one great point of difference from the French laces in that the figures are not outlined with a raised cord or thread, but simply have a flat buttonholing. The designs are sprays, small ovals, or circles, and it was much esteemed on account of its delicacy and whiteness. The groundwork is a fine net.

PUNTO DE RAGUSA. Ragusa, a city near the north-western coast of Greece, was one of the greatest Adriatic ports of Greece during the fifteenth and part of the sixteenth centuries. The peasants of the near-by Ionian Islands, and of the villages along the coast of Greece, sent to Venice, through Ragusa, drawn- and cut-work in which they excelled. But these were not the so-called Ragusa laces, which were made of gimp of gold and silver thread fastened together by bars, and wrought on the edge into a pattern of loops and trefoils. While Venice soon excelled in thread laces, the gold laces of Ragusa were deservedly famous till late in the seventeenth



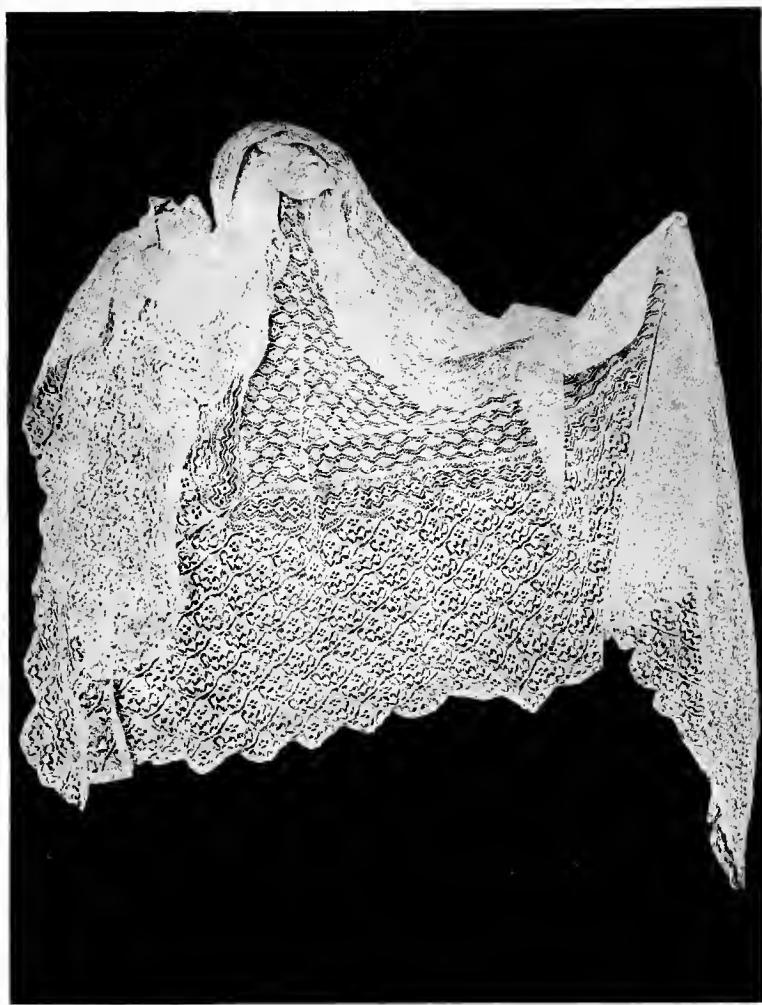
## THE LACE BOOK

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century, but were finally driven from the field on account of the expense of the material, the prohibitions against them, and the beauty of the designs and workmanship of the flax thread laces.

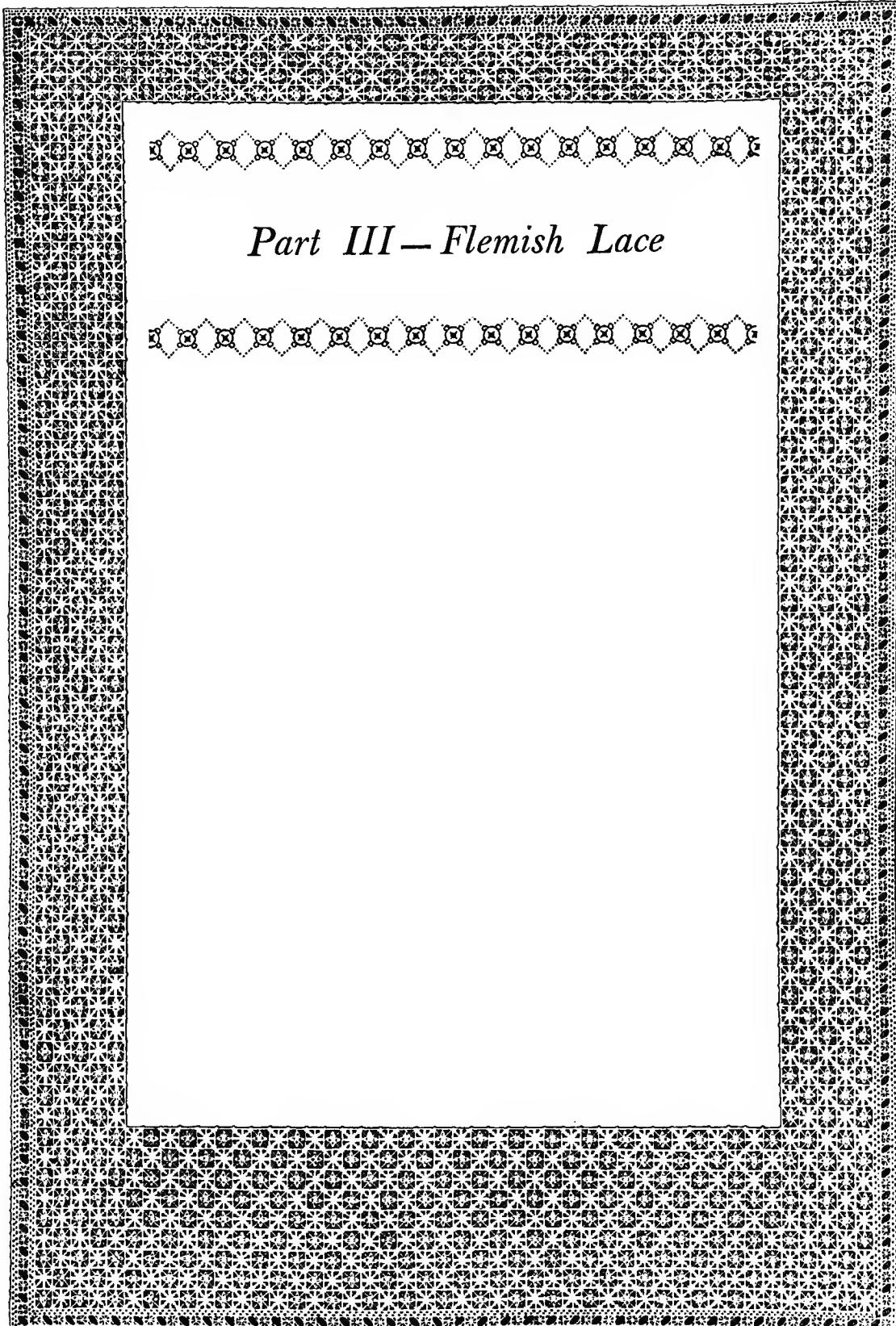
ALOE LACE, a fabric curiously delicate in character, considering the material of which it is made, has been woven in Italy since remote times. The pith of the aloe-tree is split into threads, and woven, tatted, knit, or twisted with bobbins into a sort of lace. Sometimes large pieces like shawls, lappets, and table scarfs are made; but the lace is of little use, since washing practically destroys it. It is made not only in Italy, but in the Philippine Islands, South America, and the Barbadoes Islands. It is always more interesting than beautiful and is seldom used.

The superb Medici collars, which are familiar to us from the portraits of the period, were not complete without the framework of fine metal wires which supported them. In Italy these were called *verghetti*, and such large quantities were required that many people were employed in their construction. These workers, and others of like trades, gathered in one particular quarter of Venice, which was called after them, and it still bears the name.



**PLATE XXVIII.**—Shawl made from pith of the aloe. Made in Azores Islands. Nineteenth Century.

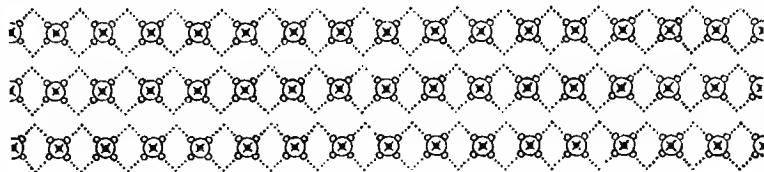




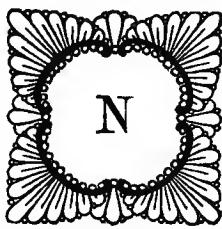
*Part III—Flemish Lace*

*“O* **F** many Arts, one surpasses all. **F**or the maiden seated at her work flashes the smooth balls and thousand threads into the circle, . . . and from this, her amusement, makes as much profit as a man earns by the sweat of his brow, and no maiden ever complains, at even, of the length of the day. The issue is a fine web, which feeds the pride of the whole globe; which surrounds with its fine border cloaks and tuckers, and shows grandly round the throats and hands of Kings.”

— JACOB VAN EYCK, 1651.

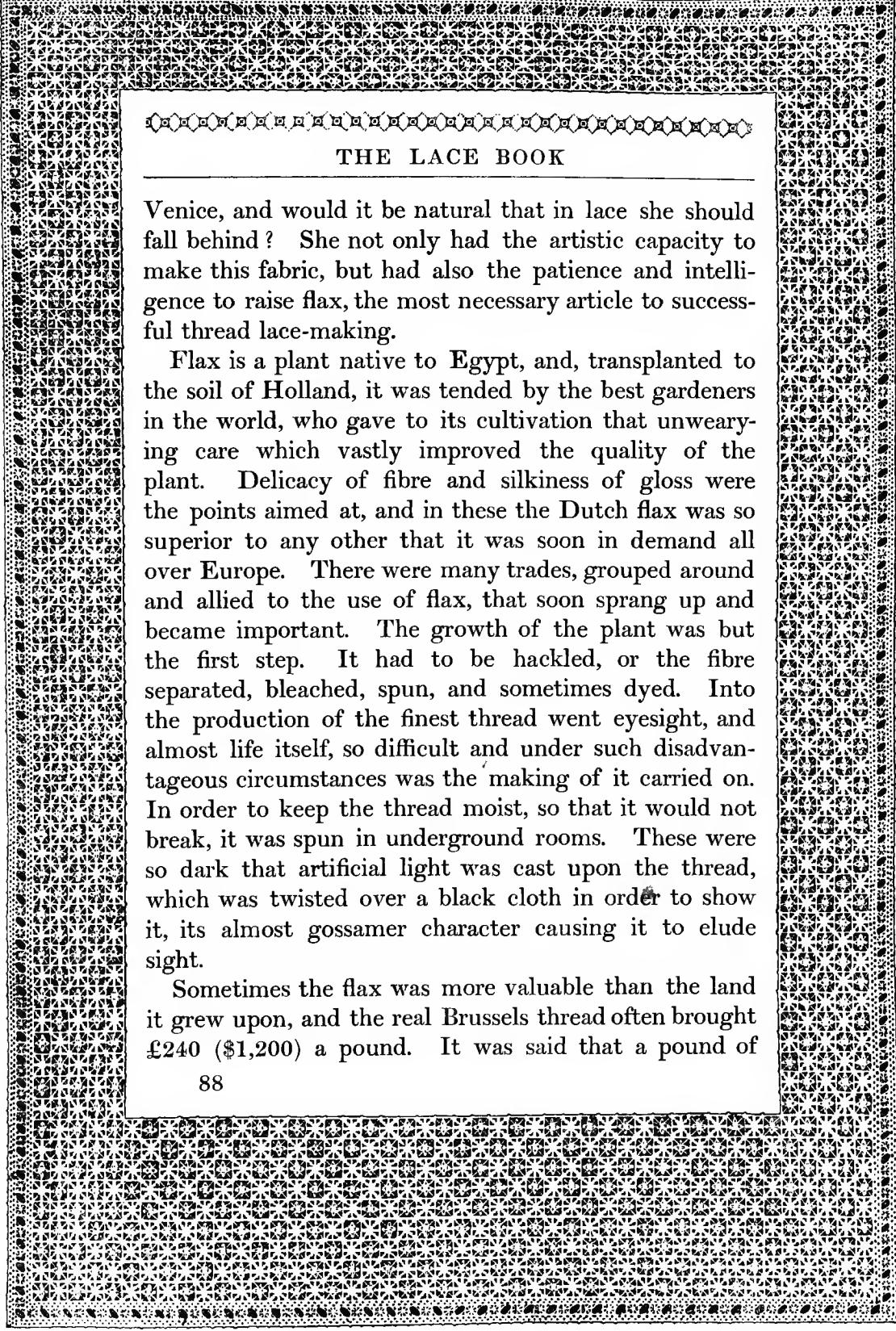


### Part III—Flemish Lace



O country in the world has a more interesting past than the Netherlands, not only from the historian's point of view, but from the artist's side ; from the standpoint of the *élégante*; from the demand of her housewives for the union of utility and beauty ; and from the lovers of flowers as well.

The Dutch, even while at war and busy wresting their little garden spot from the encroachments of the sea, had time to spend in learning and perfecting the secret of pictorial art, whose natural birthplace more appropriately seemed the sunny and beauty-loving Italy. Their conquests in China had brought to Holland specimens of porcelain, and the Dutch potter sought to imitate this in his coarse pottery, smeared with a finer surface, on which the decoration was laid, and succeeded in producing ware of great beauty and use. When commerce brought to her shores furniture carved and beautifully inlaid, she straightway set to work to copy this, and bettered the models. Her goldsmiths wrought with a delicacy and beauty that could vie even with



## THE LACE BOOK

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Venice, and would it be natural that in lace she should fall behind? She not only had the artistic capacity to make this fabric, but had also the patience and intelligence to raise flax, the most necessary article to successful thread lace-making.

Flax is a plant native to Egypt, and, transplanted to the soil of Holland, it was tended by the best gardeners in the world, who gave to its cultivation that unwearying care which vastly improved the quality of the plant. Delicacy of fibre and silkiness of gloss were the points aimed at, and in these the Dutch flax was so superior to any other that it was soon in demand all over Europe. There were many trades, grouped around and allied to the use of flax, that soon sprang up and became important. The growth of the plant was but the first step. It had to be hackled, or the fibre separated, bleached, spun, and sometimes dyed. Into the production of the finest thread went eyesight, and almost life itself, so difficult and under such disadvantageous circumstances was the making of it carried on. In order to keep the thread moist, so that it would not break, it was spun in underground rooms. These were so dark that artificial light was cast upon the thread, which was twisted over a black cloth in order to show it, its almost gossamer character causing it to elude sight.

Sometimes the flax was more valuable than the land it grew upon, and the real Brussels thread often brought £240 (\$1,200) a pound. It was said that a pound of



**P**LATE XXIX.—“Little Princess.” She wears an “underpropper” of wire beneath her lawn ruff, which is edged with Gothic Point. Cuffs edged with wide needle point. Portrait by Moreelse (1571-1638).



## FLEMISH LACE

flax—that is, before it was made into thread—could be manufactured into lace worth £700.

It is true that there have been no definite written records produced to substantiate the claim of Flanders that she was first in the field with pillow-made lace. There were no pattern-books published before those of Wilhelm Vorsterman, who died at Antwerp in 1542. The patterns are shown on small black squares and are of mediæval designs. The prevalence of lace-making in all classes is shown by the quaint dedication, which reads as follows :

“A neawe treatys ; as cōcernyng the excellency of the nedle worcke spānisse stitche and weavyng in the frame, very necessary to al theym wiche desyre the perfect knowledge of seamstry, quiltinge and brodry worke, cōteinynge an cxxxvij figures or tables, so playnli made and set tout in portraiture, the whiche is difficyll ; and natoly for crafts mē but also for gentlewemē and iōge damosels that therein may obtayne greater conyge delyte and pleasure.

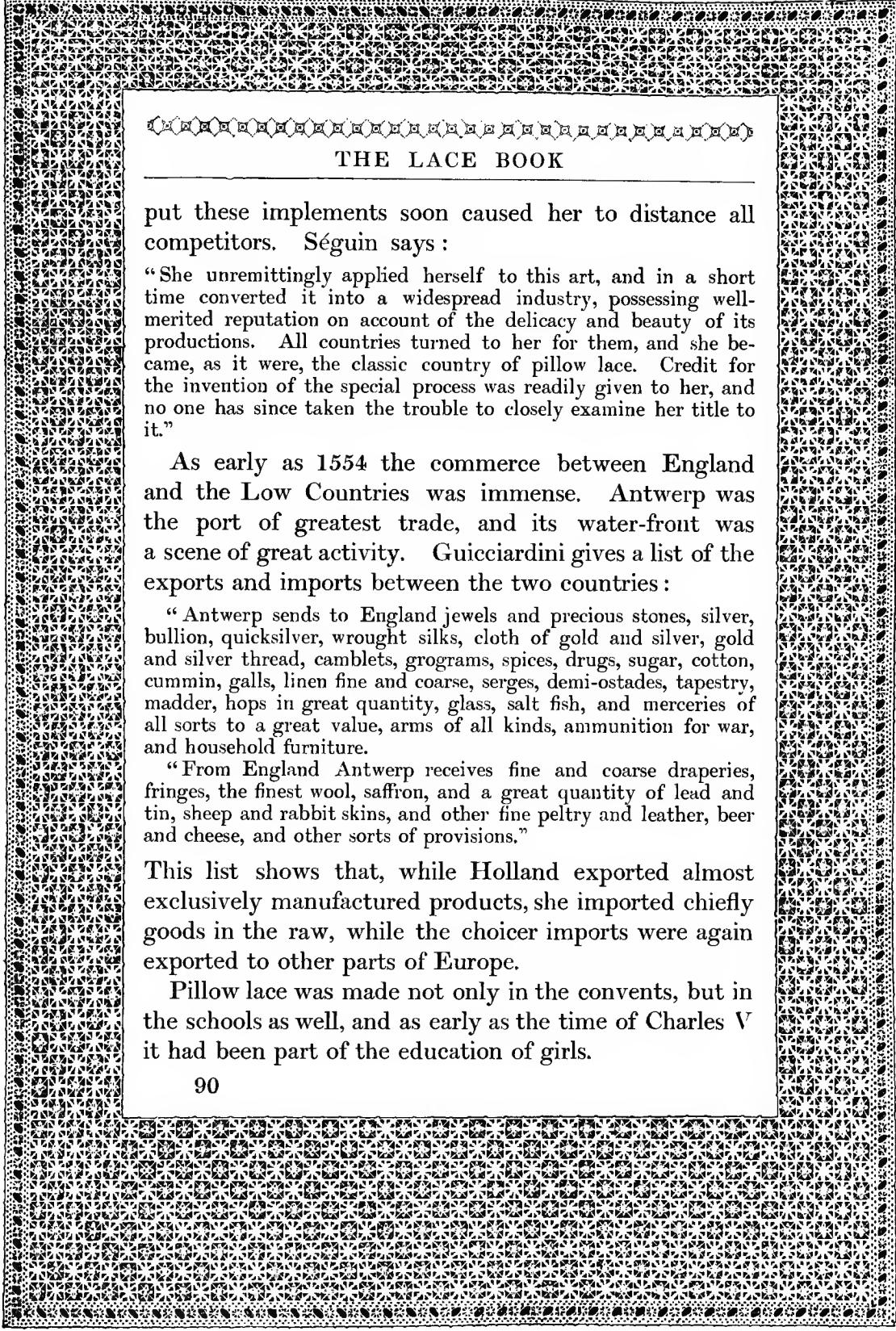
“These books be to sell at Andwarp in the golden Unycorne at Willm Vorstermans.”

There were also those of Jean de Glen, who died at Liège in 1597. It is also true that none of these books contains patterns for bobbin-made laces.

For the first mention of bobbin lace we are obliged to fall back on that old Italian inventory of the Sforza sisters, of 1493, in which one item reads :

“Binda una lavarata a poncto de doii fuxi per uno lenzuolo.”  
(A band of work done with twelve bobbins to trim a sheet.)

If the Italians were the first to use the pillow and bobbin as well as the needle, the use to which the Dutch



## THE LACE BOOK

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put these implements soon caused her to distance all competitors. Séguin says :

“She unremittingly applied herself to this art, and in a short time converted it into a widespread industry, possessing well-merited reputation on account of the delicacy and beauty of its productions. All countries turned to her for them, and she became, as it were, the classic country of pillow lace. Credit for the invention of the special process was readily given to her, and no one has since taken the trouble to closely examine her title to it.”

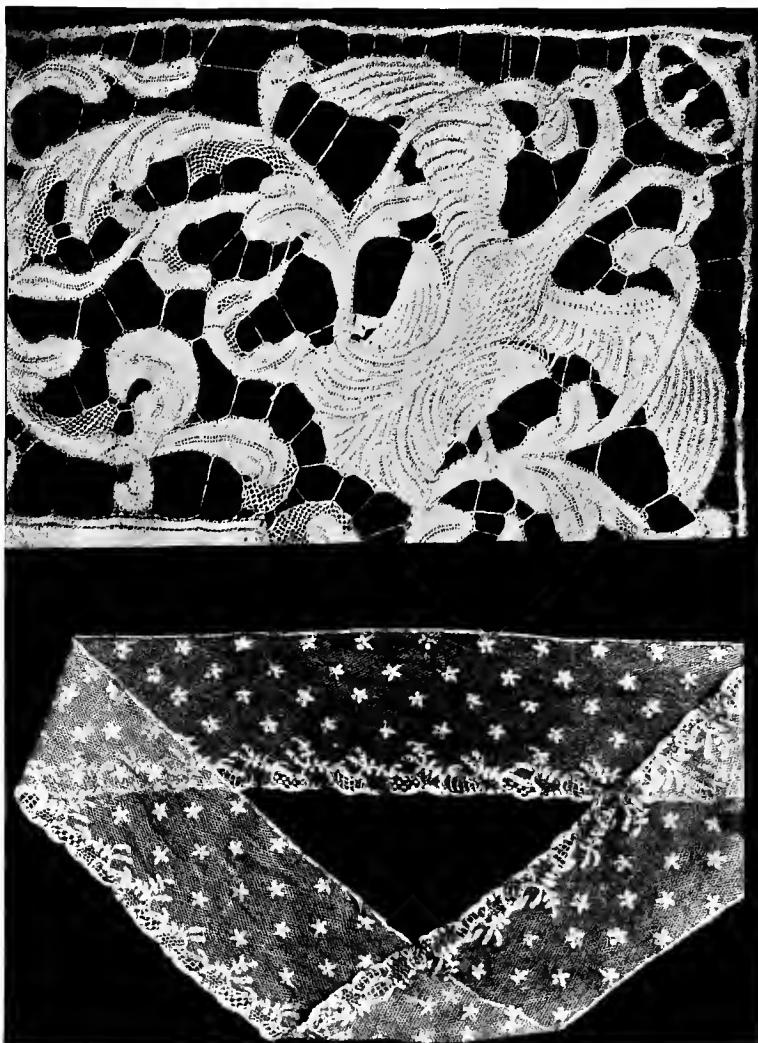
As early as 1554 the commerce between England and the Low Countries was immense. Antwerp was the port of greatest trade, and its water-front was a scene of great activity. Guicciardini gives a list of the exports and imports between the two countries :

“Antwerp sends to England jewels and precious stones, silver, bullion, quicksilver, wrought silks, cloth of gold and silver, gold and silver thread, camblets, programs, spices, drugs, sugar, cotton, cummin, galls, linen fine and coarse, serges, demi-ostades, tapestry, madder, hops in great quantity, glass, salt fish, and mercerizes of all sorts to a great value, arms of all kinds, ammunition for war, and household furniture.

“From England Antwerp receives fine and coarse draperies, fringes, the finest wool, saffron, and a great quantity of lead and tin, sheep and rabbit skins, and other fine peltry and leather, beer and cheese, and other sorts of provisions.”

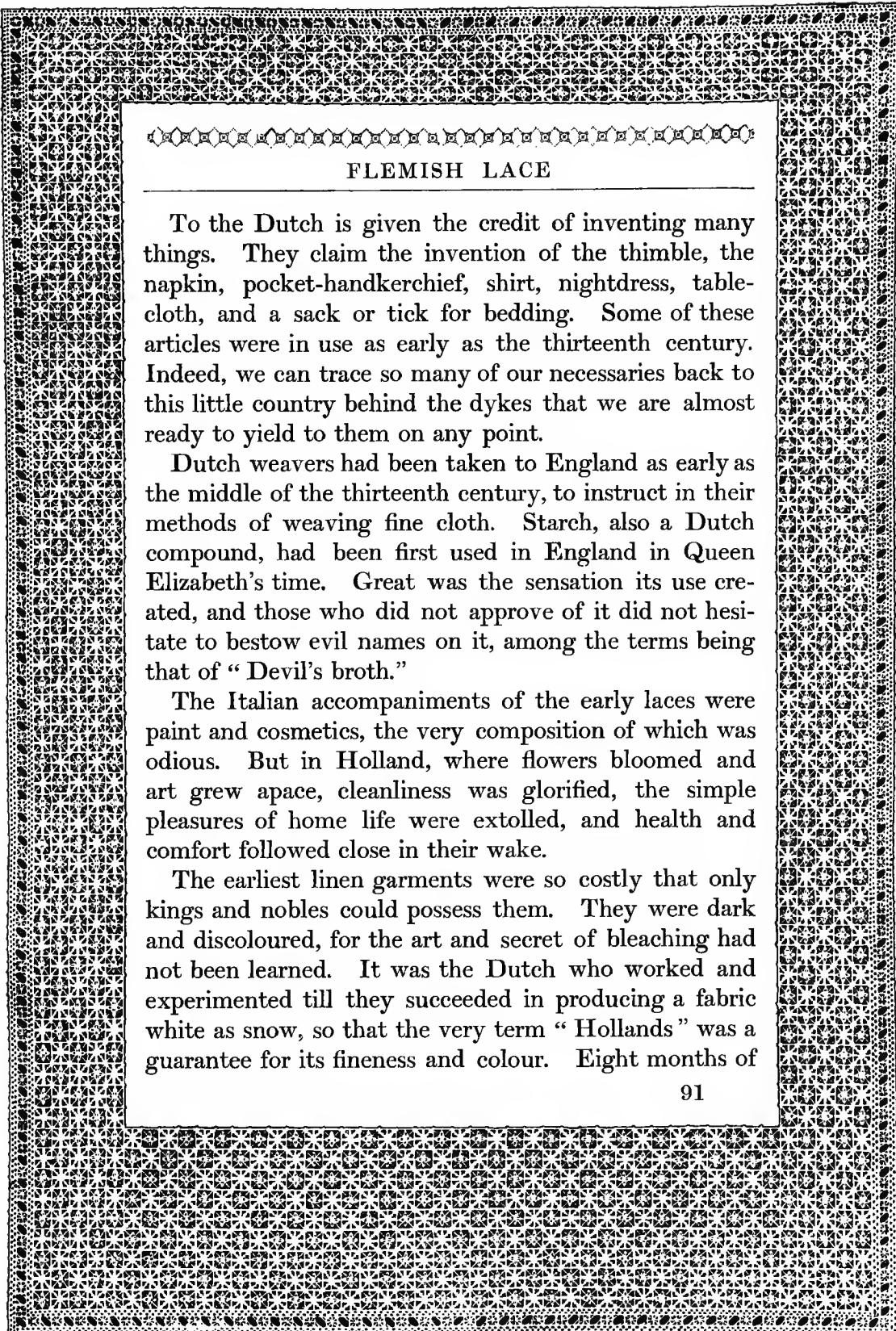
This list shows that, while Holland exported almost exclusively manufactured products, she imported chiefly goods in the raw, while the choicer imports were again exported to other parts of Europe.

Pillow lace was made not only in the convents, but in the schools as well, and as early as the time of Charles V it had been part of the education of girls.



**PLATE XXX.**—*A. Bobbin-made Flemish lace. Sixteenth Century. B. Mechlin, bobbin-made. The sprigs made separately and worked in. Seventeenth Century. This is said to have belonged to George IV.*





## FLEMISH LACE

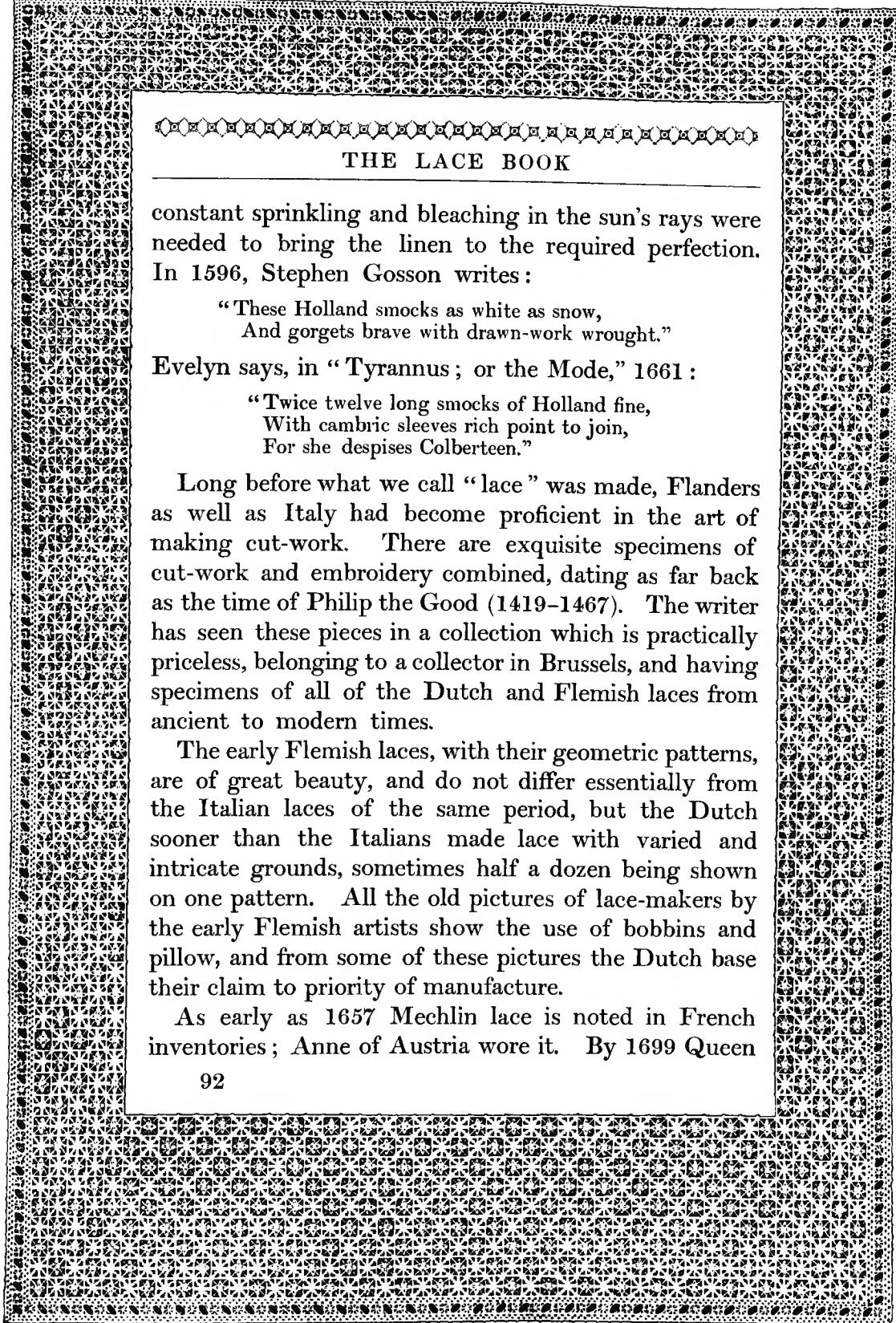
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To the Dutch is given the credit of inventing many things. They claim the invention of the thimble, the napkin, pocket-handkerchief, shirt, nightdress, table-cloth, and a sack or tick for bedding. Some of these articles were in use as early as the thirteenth century. Indeed, we can trace so many of our necessaries back to this little country behind the dykes that we are almost ready to yield to them on any point.

Dutch weavers had been taken to England as early as the middle of the thirteenth century, to instruct in their methods of weaving fine cloth. Starch, also a Dutch compound, had been first used in England in Queen Elizabeth's time. Great was the sensation its use created, and those who did not approve of it did not hesitate to bestow evil names on it, among the terms being that of " Devil's broth."

The Italian accompaniments of the early laces were paint and cosmetics, the very composition of which was odious. But in Holland, where flowers bloomed and art grew apace, cleanliness was glorified, the simple pleasures of home life were extolled, and health and comfort followed close in their wake.

The earliest linen garments were so costly that only kings and nobles could possess them. They were dark and discoloured, for the art and secret of bleaching had not been learned. It was the Dutch who worked and experimented till they succeeded in producing a fabric white as snow, so that the very term " Hollands " was a guarantee for its fineness and colour. Eight months of



## THE LACE BOOK

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constant sprinkling and bleaching in the sun's rays were needed to bring the linen to the required perfection. In 1596, Stephen Gosson writes :

“These Holland smocks as white as snow,  
And gorgets brave with drawn-work wrought.”

Evelyn says, in “Tyrannus ; or the Mode,” 1661 :

“Twice twelve long smocks of Holland fine,  
With cambric sleeves rich point to join,  
For she despises Colbertean.”

Long before what we call “lace” was made, Flanders as well as Italy had become proficient in the art of making cut-work. There are exquisite specimens of cut-work and embroidery combined, dating as far back as the time of Philip the Good (1419-1467). The writer has seen these pieces in a collection which is practically priceless, belonging to a collector in Brussels, and having specimens of all of the Dutch and Flemish laces from ancient to modern times.

The early Flemish laces, with their geometric patterns, are of great beauty, and do not differ essentially from the Italian laces of the same period, but the Dutch sooner than the Italians made lace with varied and intricate grounds, sometimes half a dozen being shown on one pattern. All the old pictures of lace-makers by the early Flemish artists show the use of bobbins and pillow, and from some of these pictures the Dutch base their claim to priority of manufacture.

As early as 1657 Mechlin lace is noted in French inventories ; Anne of Austria wore it. By 1699 Queen



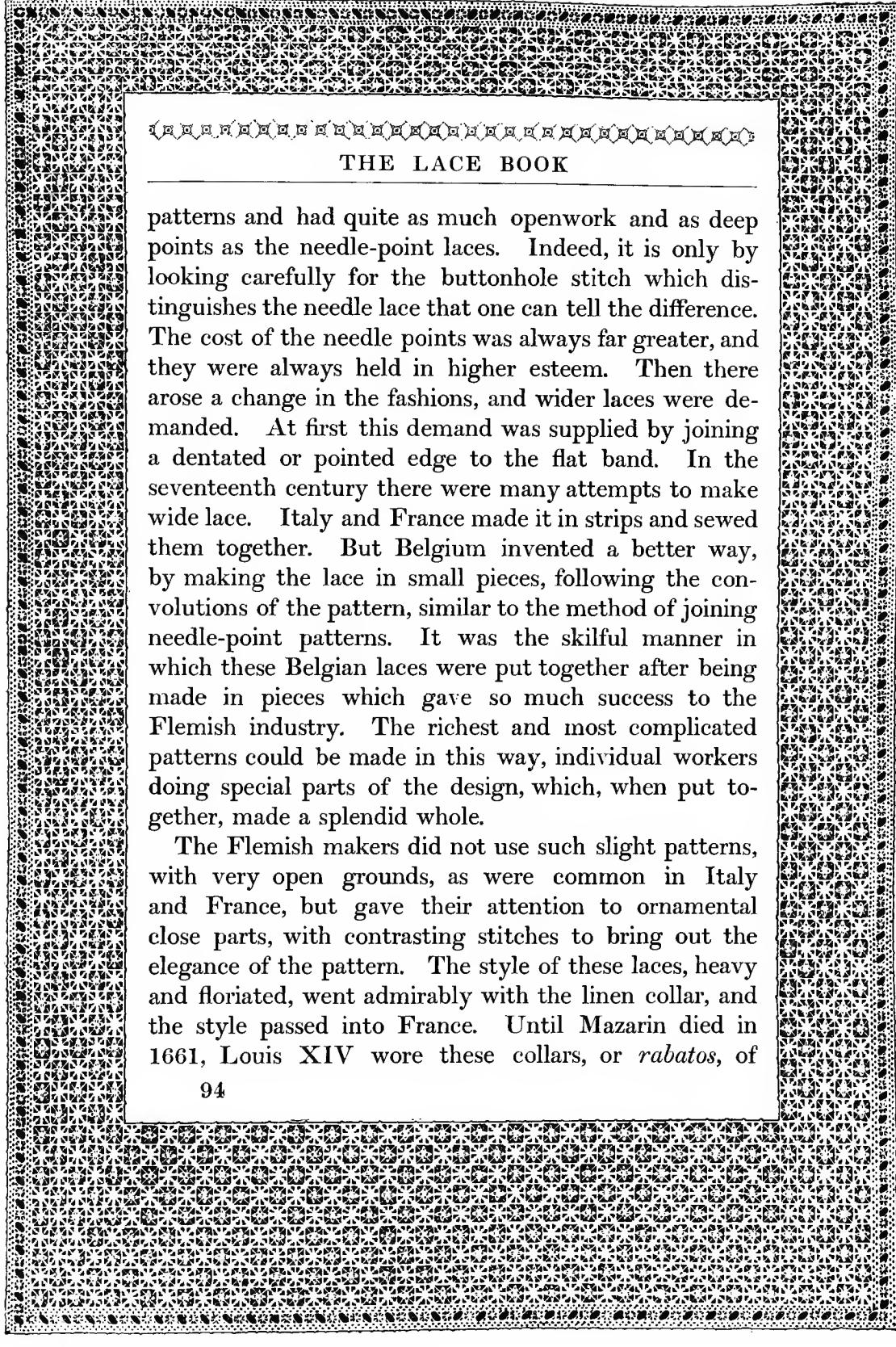
## FLEMISH LACE

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Mary's Mechlin ruffles are noted in the Wardrobe Accounts, and "Holland shirts laced with Mechlin lace" were in great demand among the *élégantes*. Whether this was the fine, delicately flowered and sprigged lace which was known later as Mechlin, or only the commercial term under which all Flanders lace was known, it would be hard to say.

Until 1699 a prohibition upon Flemish laces kept those fabrics out of England (this being another reason for calling one kind of Brussels lace "*Point d'Angleterre*"), but after the ban was removed Mechlin immediately sprang into fashion. Mechlin is a pillow lace, made all in one piece, each little flower and sprig outlined by a flat thread. It is a rather thin lace,—a "summer lace," the French court beauties termed it,—and it looked its best on cravats, full ruffles, borders to caps, or fichus, its very delicacy preventing its looking well on the gorgeous damasks and brocades of court costume. It early declined in manufacture, and, although still made at Antwerp, Lierre, and several other places, as well as at Mechlin, its place has been almost entirely filled by other laces.

Nor were the thread pillow laces the only bobbin ones for which Belgium and Holland were noted. They used silk as well as gold and silver. The early pillow laces were all narrow, and were made on the pillow with all the bobbins at one end. This style was the only kind of bobbin lace produced in either France, Italy, Spain, or Flanders, but it presented a great variety of



## THE LACE BOOK

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patterns and had quite as much openwork and as deep points as the needle-point laces. Indeed, it is only by looking carefully for the buttonhole stitch which distinguishes the needle lace that one can tell the difference. The cost of the needle points was always far greater, and they were always held in higher esteem. Then there arose a change in the fashions, and wider laces were demanded. At first this demand was supplied by joining a dentated or pointed edge to the flat band. In the seventeenth century there were many attempts to make wide lace. Italy and France made it in strips and sewed them together. But Belgium invented a better way, by making the lace in small pieces, following the convolutions of the pattern, similar to the method of joining needle-point patterns. It was the skilful manner in which these Belgian laces were put together after being made in pieces which gave so much success to the Flemish industry. The richest and most complicated patterns could be made in this way, individual workers doing special parts of the design, which, when put together, made a splendid whole.

The Flemish makers did not use such slight patterns, with very open grounds, as were common in Italy and France, but gave their attention to ornamental close parts, with contrasting stitches to bring out the elegance of the pattern. The style of these laces, heavy and floriated, went admirably with the linen collar, and the style passed into France. Until Mazarin died in 1661, Louis XIV wore these collars, or *rabatos*, of



**P**LATE XXXI.—*Portrait of a young man.*  
*He wears a collar trimmed with Point de Flandre.* *Portrait by Jan de Bray, died 1697.*





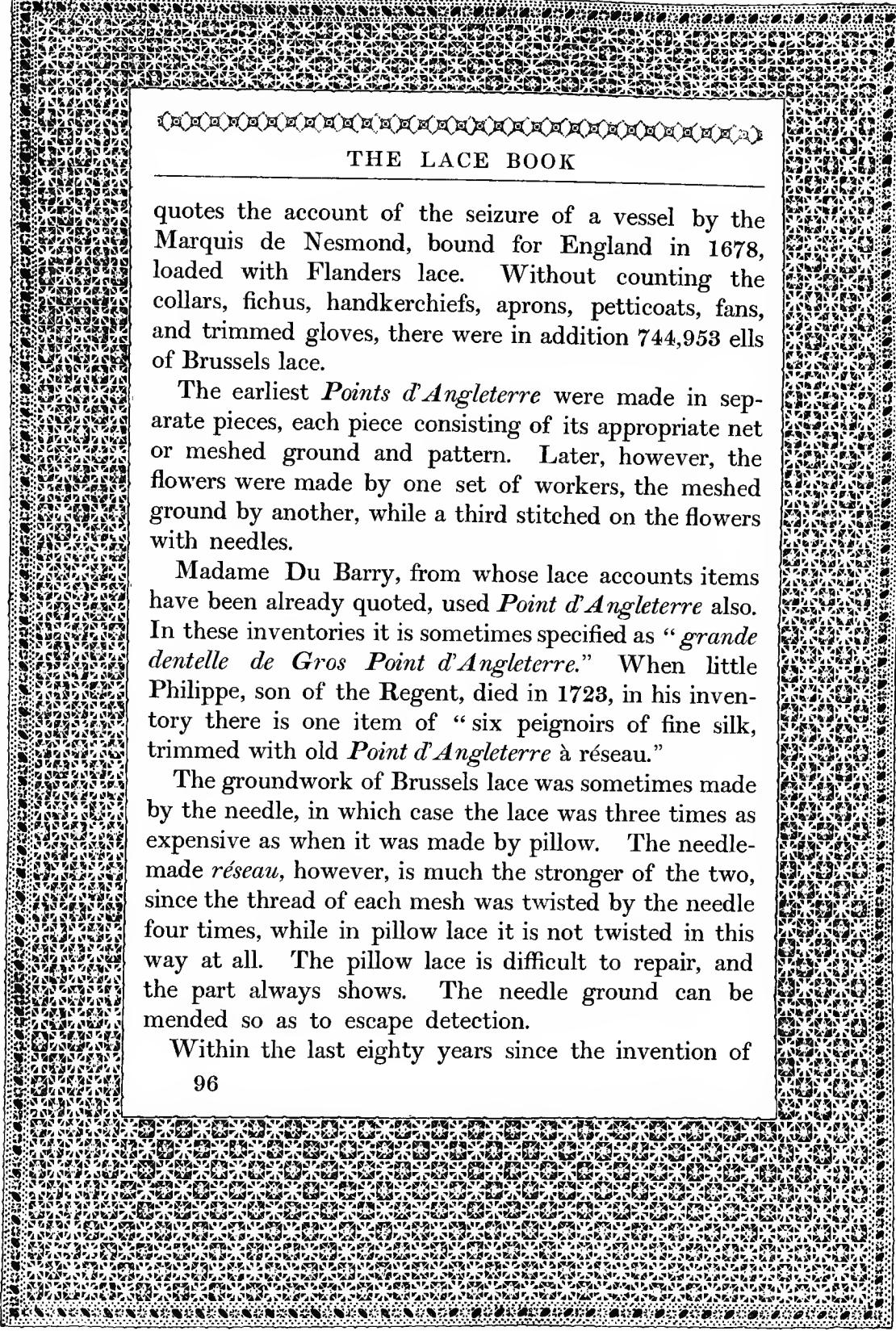
## FLEMISH LACE

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pillow-made Guipure lace, and they are shown in several of his early portraits. He was fully 25 when the use of Venetian needle points came in, and turned the attention of the king and his minister to the making of similar laces.

Brussels lace—*Point d'Aiguille*—was the most beautiful and costly of all the needle lace made in the Low Countries, and its successful manufacture was confined to the city of Brussels itself. The grounds could be either *à réseau* or of brides. As in Italian laces, the brides were the earliest form of connection between different portions of the pattern; but they were soon discarded, and by the end of the seventeenth century the ground *à réseau* was used entirely, except when, in ordering lace made, brides were specified. Sometimes the two grounds were used in the same pattern with very beautiful effect.

Just how early one kind of Brussels bobbin lace came to have the name *Point d'Angleterre* applied to it is a matter of doubt. Enthusiastic collectors of lace, particularly if of English birth, claim that English Point was first made in England and was successfully copied by the facile Dutch. Certain it is that England could not begin to supply the demand of the English court alone for this lace, and that large quantities of lace were bought in Flanders and brought boldly into England, or smuggled in, in coffins, by dogs, or in any other manner which cupidity and inventiveness could suggest. To give some idea of the enormous amount of Flemish lace which was smuggled into England, Mrs. Bury Palliser



## THE LACE BOOK

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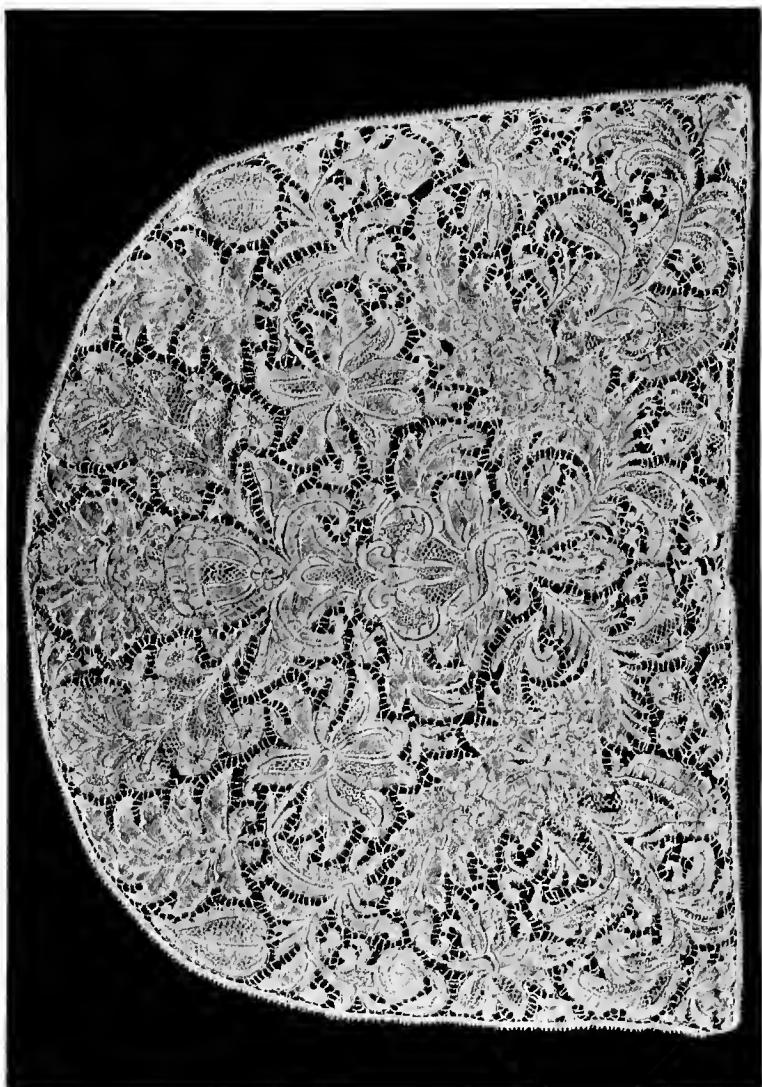
quotes the account of the seizure of a vessel by the Marquis de Nesmond, bound for England in 1678, loaded with Flanders lace. Without counting the collars, fichus, handkerchiefs, aprons, petticoats, fans, and trimmed gloves, there were in addition 744,953 ells of Brussels lace.

The earliest *Points d'Angleterre* were made in separate pieces, each piece consisting of its appropriate net or meshed ground and pattern. Later, however, the flowers were made by one set of workers, the meshed ground by another, while a third stitched on the flowers with needles.

Madame Du Barry, from whose lace accounts items have been already quoted, used *Point d'Angleterre* also. In these inventories it is sometimes specified as "*grande dentelle de Gros Point d'Angleterre*." When little Philippe, son of the Regent, died in 1723, in his inventory there is one item of "six peignoirs of fine silk, trimmed with old *Point d'Angleterre à réseau*."

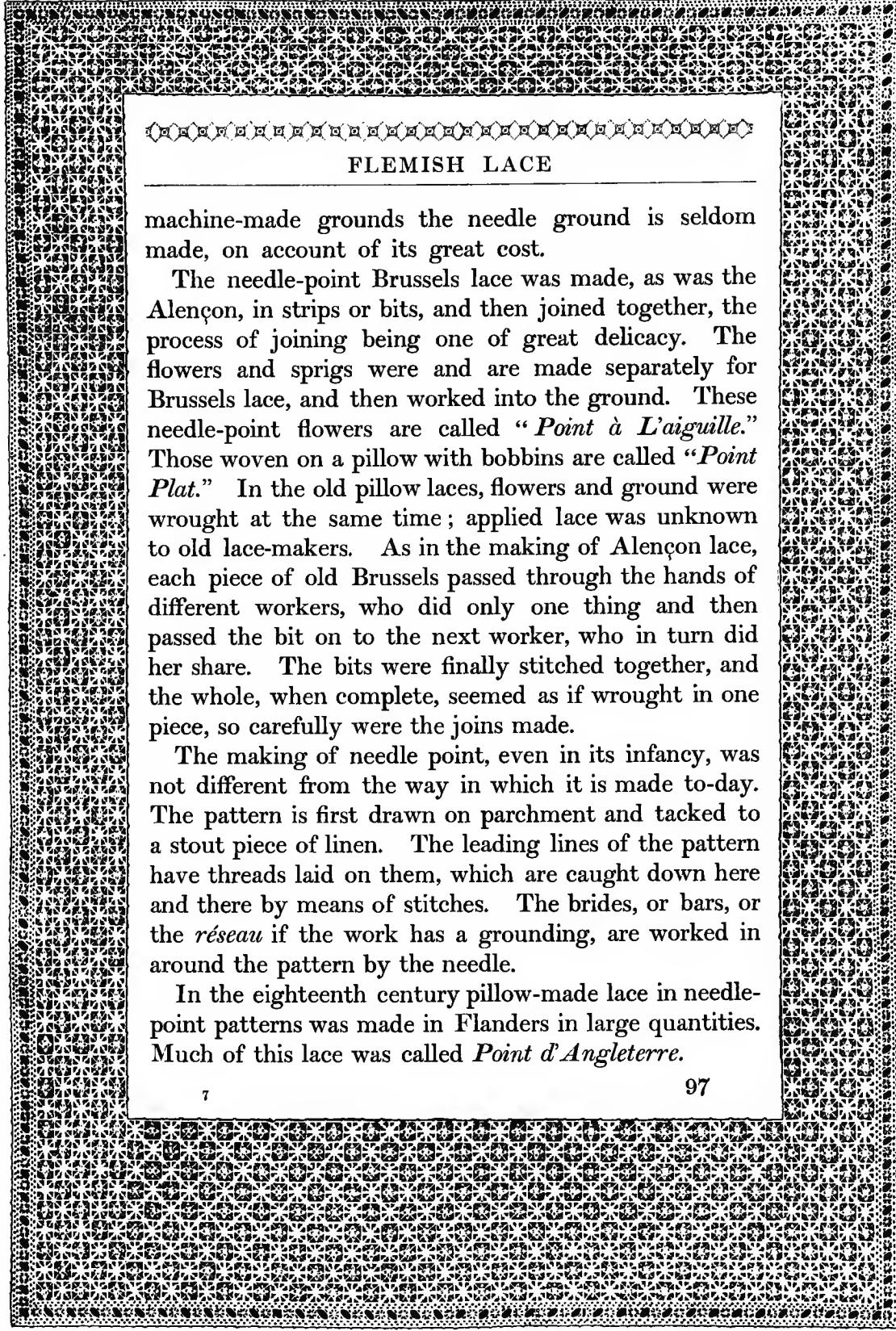
The groundwork of Brussels lace was sometimes made by the needle, in which case the lace was three times as expensive as when it was made by pillow. The needle-made *réseau*, however, is much the stronger of the two, since the thread of each mesh was twisted by the needle four times, while in pillow lace it is not twisted in this way at all. The pillow lace is difficult to repair, and the part always shows. The needle ground can be mended so as to escape detection.

Within the last eighty years since the invention of



**PLATE XXXII.**—*Portion of cap. Point d'Angleterre à Brides. Bobbin-made lace. Seventeenth Century. Photographed by Charles Balliard.*





## FLEMISH LACE

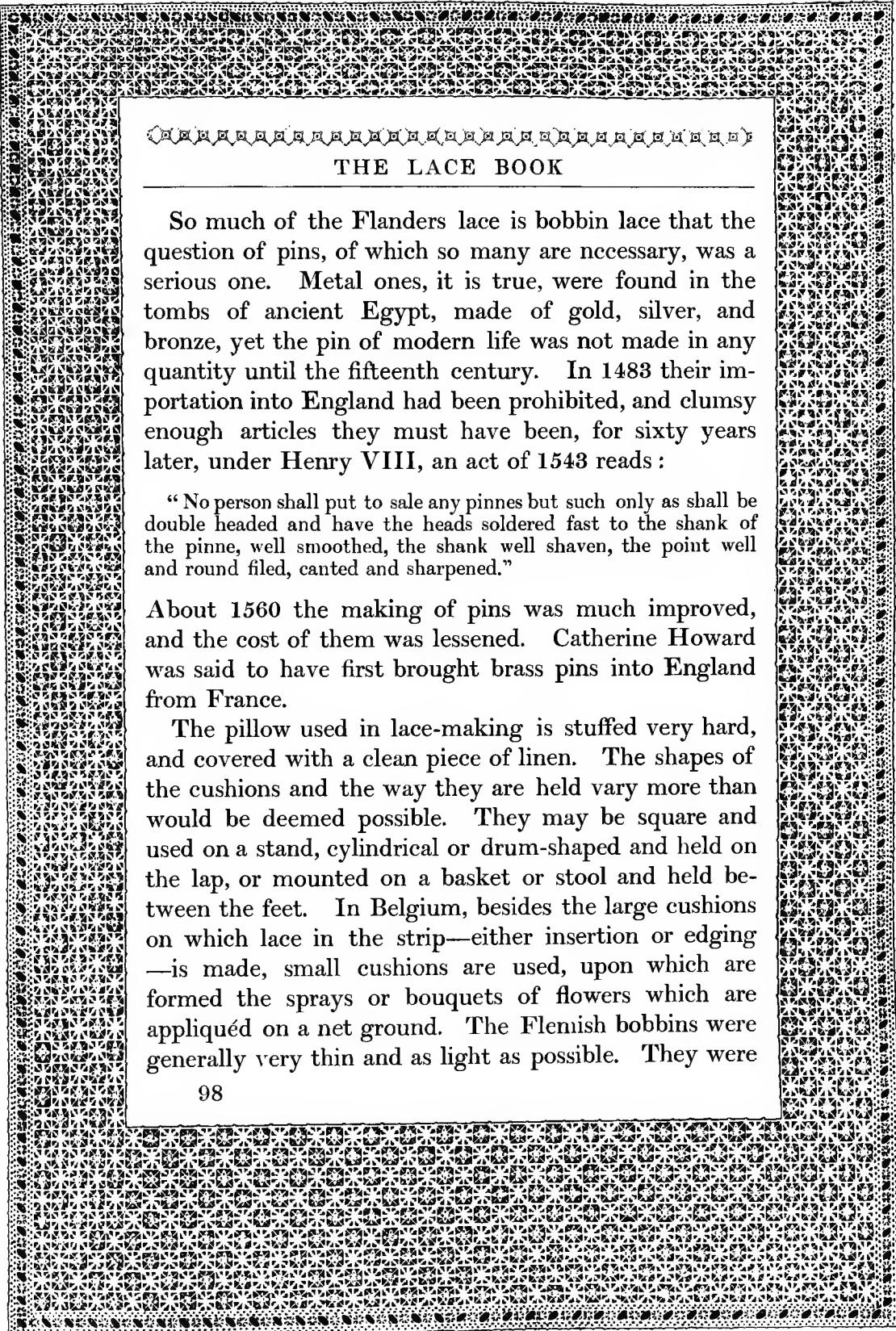
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machine-made grounds the needle ground is seldom made, on account of its great cost.

The needle-point Brussels lace was made, as was the Alençon, in strips or bits, and then joined together, the process of joining being one of great delicacy. The flowers and sprigs were and are made separately for Brussels lace, and then worked into the ground. These needle-point flowers are called "*Point à L'aiguille*." Those woven on a pillow with bobbins are called "*Point Plat*." In the old pillow laces, flowers and ground were wrought at the same time; applied lace was unknown to old lace-makers. As in the making of Alençon lace, each piece of old Brussels passed through the hands of different workers, who did only one thing and then passed the bit on to the next worker, who in turn did her share. The bits were finally stitched together, and the whole, when complete, seemed as if wrought in one piece, so carefully were the joins made.

The making of needle point, even in its infancy, was not different from the way in which it is made to-day. The pattern is first drawn on parchment and tacked to a stout piece of linen. The leading lines of the pattern have threads laid on them, which are caught down here and there by means of stitches. The brides, or bars, or the *réseau* if the work has a grounding, are worked in around the pattern by the needle.

In the eighteenth century pillow-made lace in needle-point patterns was made in Flanders in large quantities. Much of this lace was called *Point d'Angleterre*.



## THE LACE BOOK

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So much of the Flanders lace is bobbin lace that the question of pins, of which so many are necessary, was a serious one. Metal ones, it is true, were found in the tombs of ancient Egypt, made of gold, silver, and bronze, yet the pin of modern life was not made in any quantity until the fifteenth century. In 1483 their importation into England had been prohibited, and clumsy enough articles they must have been, for sixty years later, under Henry VIII, an act of 1543 reads :

“ No person shall put to sale any pinnes but such only as shall be double headed and have the heads soldered fast to the shank of the pinne, well smoothed, the shank well shaven, the point well and round filed, canted and sharpened.”

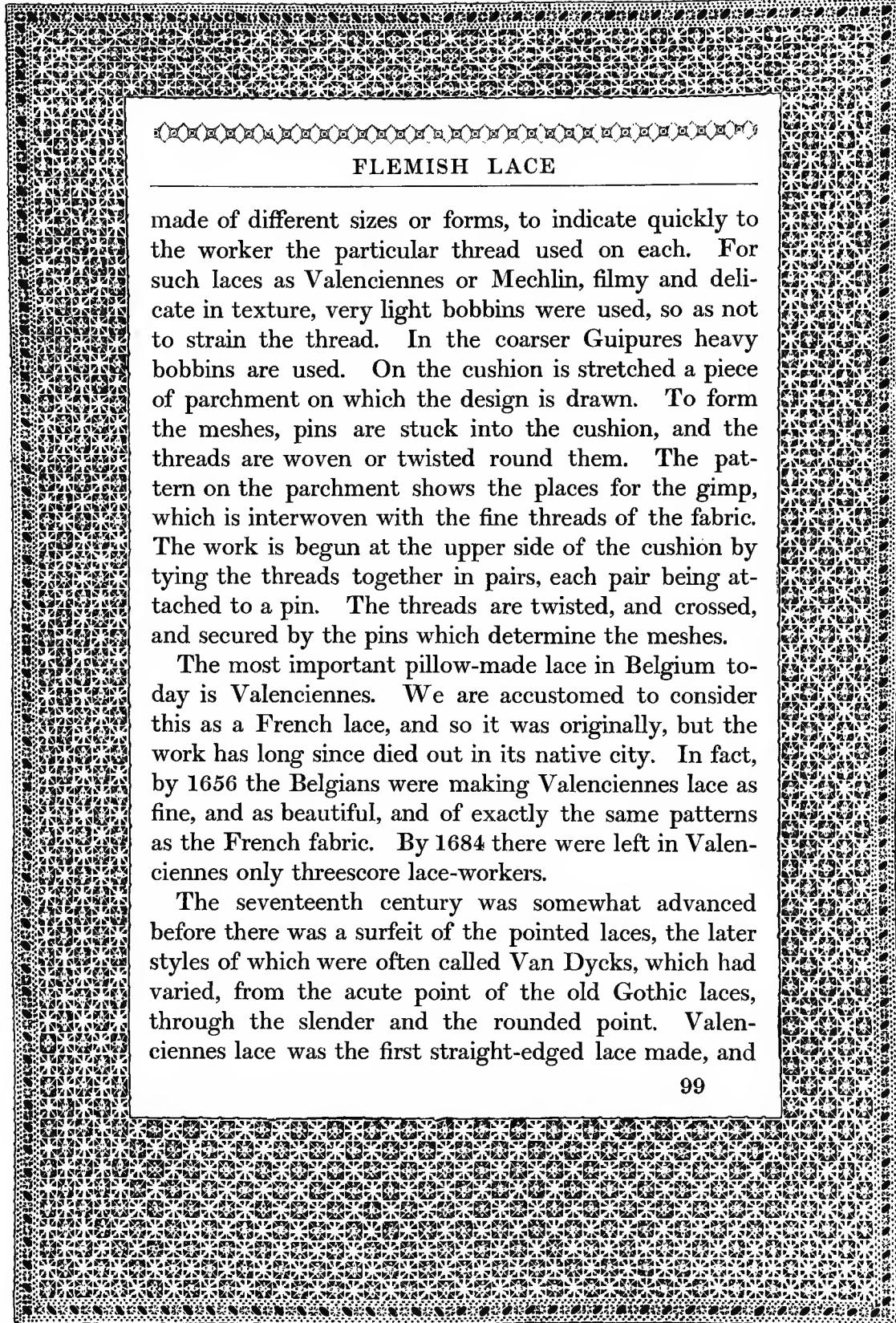
About 1560 the making of pins was much improved, and the cost of them was lessened. Catherine Howard was said to have first brought brass pins into England from France.

The pillow used in lace-making is stuffed very hard, and covered with a clean piece of linen. The shapes of the cushions and the way they are held vary more than would be deemed possible. They may be square and used on a stand, cylindrical or drum-shaped and held on the lap, or mounted on a basket or stool and held between the feet. In Belgium, besides the large cushions on which lace in the strip—either insertion or edging—is made, small cushions are used, upon which are formed the sprays or bouquets of flowers which are appliquéd on a net ground. The Flemish bobbins were generally very thin and as light as possible. They were



**PLATE XXXIII.**—*Francis Henry of Orange.*  
*Gothic needle point on collar and cuffs. Gold lace on cloak. Portrait by Mierevelt (1567-1641).*





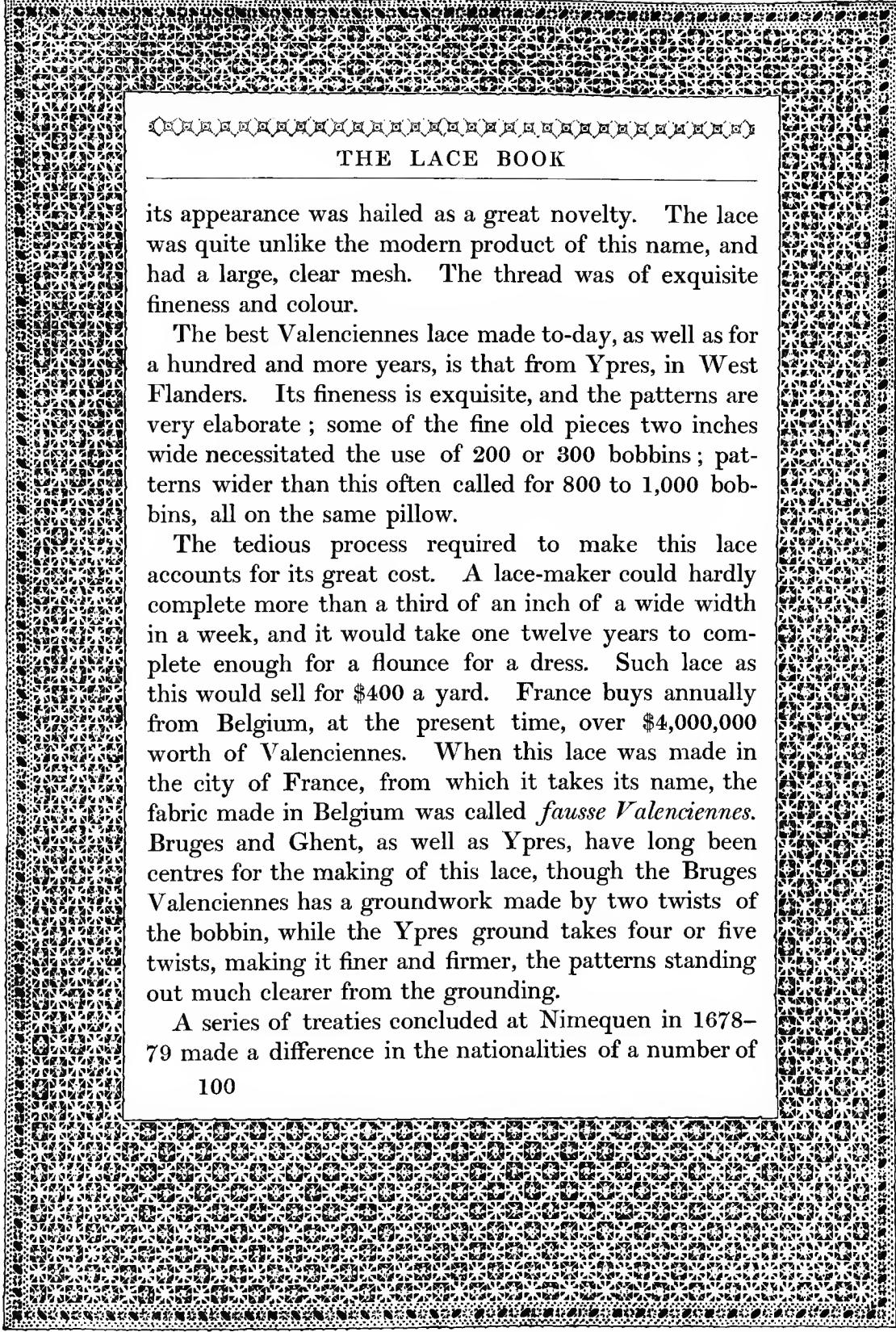
## FLEMISH LACE

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made of different sizes or forms, to indicate quickly to the worker the particular thread used on each. For such laces as Valenciennes or Mechlin, filmy and delicate in texture, very light bobbins were used, so as not to strain the thread. In the coarser Guipures heavy bobbins are used. On the cushion is stretched a piece of parchment on which the design is drawn. To form the meshes, pins are stuck into the cushion, and the threads are woven or twisted round them. The pattern on the parchment shows the places for the gimp, which is interwoven with the fine threads of the fabric. The work is begun at the upper side of the cushion by tying the threads together in pairs, each pair being attached to a pin. The threads are twisted, and crossed, and secured by the pins which determine the meshes.

The most important pillow-made lace in Belgium to-day is Valenciennes. We are accustomed to consider this as a French lace, and so it was originally, but the work has long since died out in its native city. In fact, by 1656 the Belgians were making Valenciennes lace as fine, and as beautiful, and of exactly the same patterns as the French fabric. By 1684 there were left in Valenciennes only threescore lace-workers.

The seventeenth century was somewhat advanced before there was a surfeit of the pointed laces, the later styles of which were often called Van Dycks, which had varied, from the acute point of the old Gothic laces, through the slender and the rounded point. Valenciennes lace was the first straight-edged lace made, and



## THE LACE BOOK

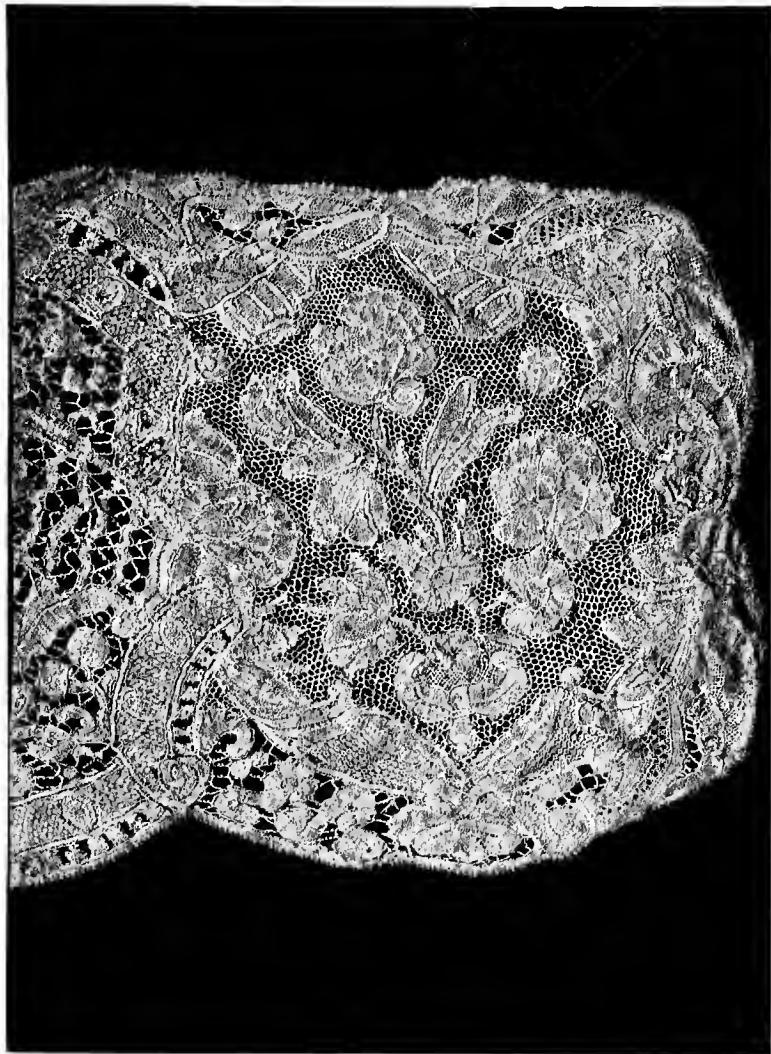
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its appearance was hailed as a great novelty. The lace was quite unlike the modern product of this name, and had a large, clear mesh. The thread was of exquisite fineness and colour.

The best Valenciennes lace made to-day, as well as for a hundred and more years, is that from Ypres, in West Flanders. Its fineness is exquisite, and the patterns are very elaborate ; some of the fine old pieces two inches wide necessitated the use of 200 or 300 bobbins ; patterns wider than this often called for 800 to 1,000 bobbins, all on the same pillow.

The tedious process required to make this lace accounts for its great cost. A lace-maker could hardly complete more than a third of an inch of a wide width in a week, and it would take one twelve years to complete enough for a flounce for a dress. Such lace as this would sell for \$400 a yard. France buys annually from Belgium, at the present time, over \$4,000,000 worth of Valenciennes. When this lace was made in the city of France, from which it takes its name, the fabric made in Belgium was called *fausse Valenciennes*. Bruges and Ghent, as well as Ypres, have long been centres for the making of this lace, though the Bruges Valenciennes has a groundwork made by two twists of the bobbin, while the Ypres ground takes four or five twists, making it finer and firmer, the patterns standing out much clearer from the grounding.

A series of treaties concluded at Nimequen in 1678-79 made a difference in the nationalities of a number of



**P**LATE XXXIV.—*Point d'Angleterre à réseau.*  
*Part of a lappet. Eighteenth Century.*



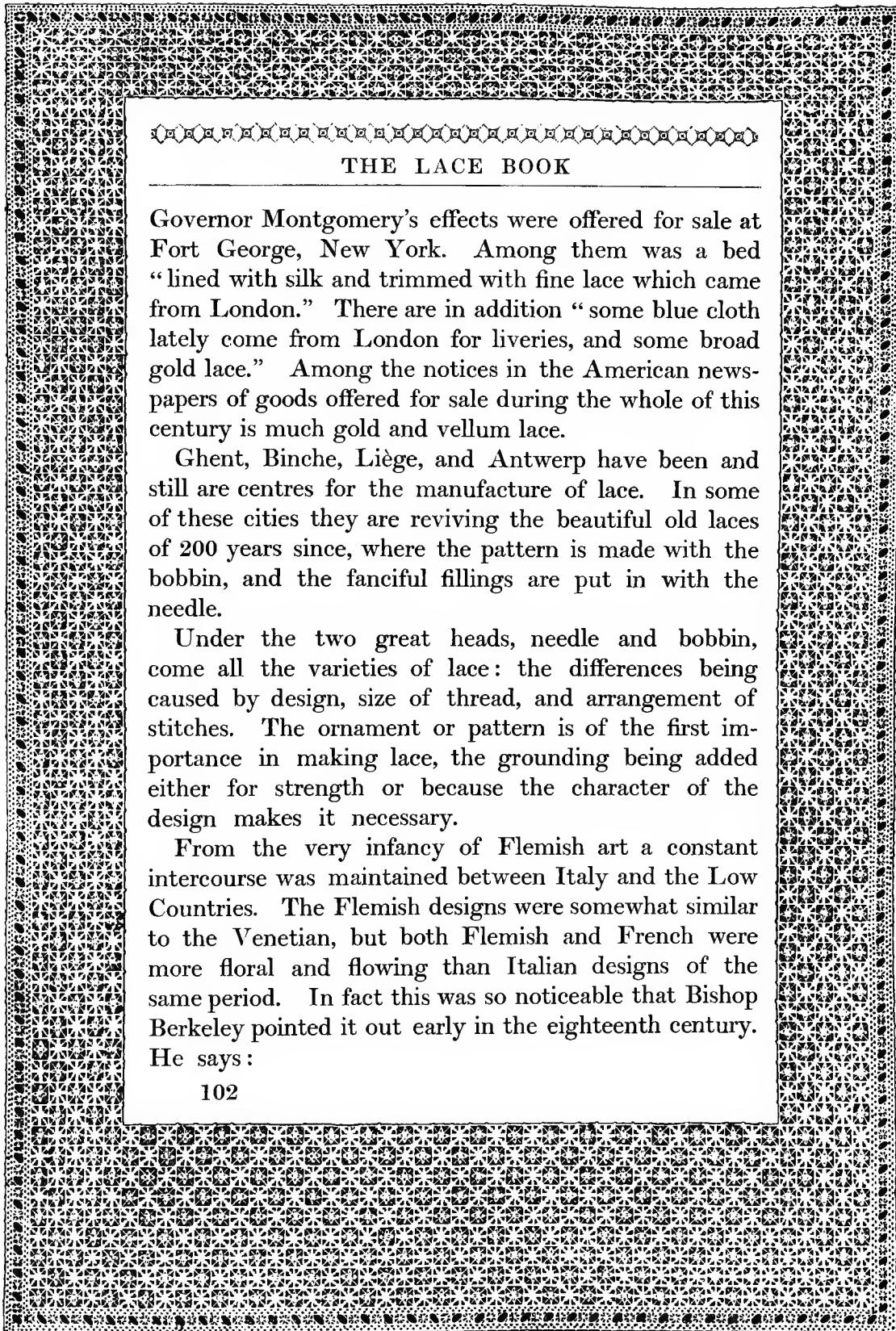
## FLEMISH LACE

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lace-making towns. They put an end to the hostilities between Holland and France which had begun six years before. The countries engaged in these treaties were Holland, France, Spain, and Sweden. Spain ceded Valenciennes, Ypres, St. Omer, Cambrai, and many other towns back to France, while France ceded Ghent, Limburg, Oudenarde, Charleroi, and half a dozen more to Spain.

In 1685 came the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, by which the lace industry of France suffered so severely; for the proclamation was followed by the emigration of about 300,000 persons, artisans of all kinds as well as men of letters and science. These refugees sought an asylum in Holland, England, and America, and spread the making of lace into widely divergent places. The value of the gold and silver lace trade of the city of Lyons alone was valued at 4,000,000 francs yearly, and this was transferred to Genoa. The workmen took with them their trade secrets, and France was thenceforward obliged to buy the gold lace she needed instead of being able to supply the world.

The American colonies opened quite a promising field, notably some of the flourishing southern colonies. In New York, Madam Steenwych, a rich, hospitable, and several times married Dutch lady, had much household gear, and it was of no mean quality, as her inventory shows. Among many other chairs are mentioned "two easy chairs with silver lace." And this, too, was as early as 1664. In the first half of the eighteenth century,



## THE LACE BOOK

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Governor Montgomery's effects were offered for sale at Fort George, New York. Among them was a bed "lined with silk and trimmed with fine lace which came from London." There are in addition "some blue cloth lately come from London for liveries, and some broad gold lace." Among the notices in the American newspapers of goods offered for sale during the whole of this century is much gold and vellum lace.

Ghent, Binche, Liège, and Antwerp have been and still are centres for the manufacture of lace. In some of these cities they are reviving the beautiful old laces of 200 years since, where the pattern is made with the bobbin, and the fanciful fillings are put in with the needle.

Under the two great heads, needle and bobbin, come all the varieties of lace: the differences being caused by design, size of thread, and arrangement of stitches. The ornament or pattern is of the first importance in making lace, the grounding being added either for strength or because the character of the design makes it necessary.

From the very infancy of Flemish art a constant intercourse was maintained between Italy and the Low Countries. The Flemish designs were somewhat similar to the Venetian, but both Flemish and French were more floral and flowing than Italian designs of the same period. In fact this was so noticeable that Bishop Berkeley pointed it out early in the eighteenth century. He says:



**PLATE XXXV.**—Rubens' wife, by Frans Hals  
(1584-1666). Ruff trimmed with fine Gothic  
needle point. Cuffs and cap with Flanders bobbin-  
lace, and stomacher of gold lace.





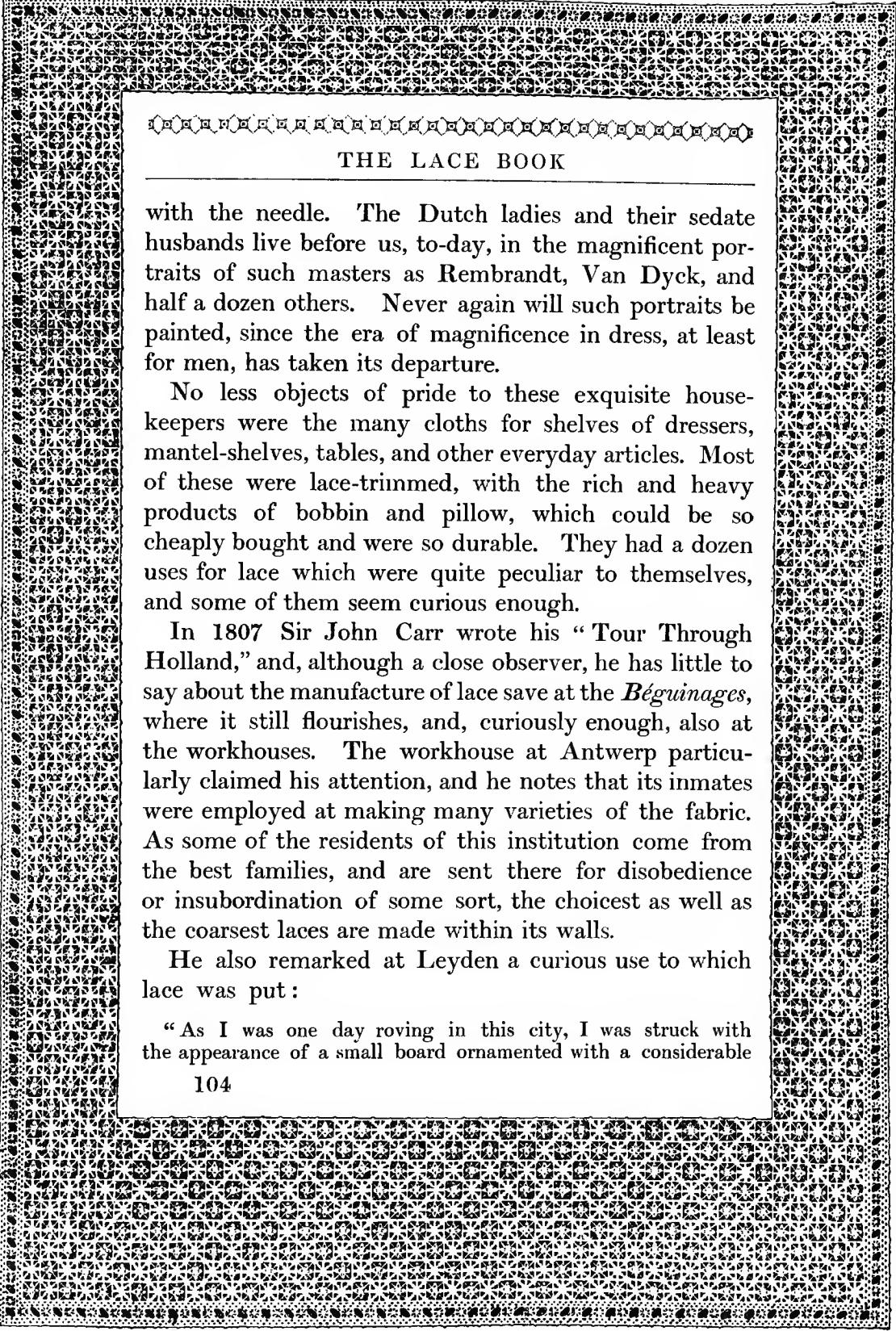
## FLEMISH LACE

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“How have France and Flanders drawn so much money from other countries for figured silk, lace, and tapestry? It is because they have their academies of design.”

Besides their academies they had been further protected by a particular stitch called the “crossing-stitch,” the secret of which was guarded as carefully as possible. Italian laces were imitated perfectly in Flanders and France, while Belgian fabrics, and to some extent English laces as well, were made only in the country of their birth. The taste for flowers, so largely developed in the Flemings and Dutch, found expression in their artists, and soon crept into their pattern-books. The favourite tulip, the forms of which are so admirably adapted for use in geometric patterns, was soon utilised in the splendid laces of the period, and when the tulip mania was at its height it was reflected in *rabato*, band, and *passements*.

From 1589 to 1650, the ruff, with all its eccentric convolutions, was gradually superseded by the flat collar of Dutch linen, with an insertion and edge of lace, or with simply a rich lace border. The fashions of France and Italy were adopted in Flanders with certain modifications which gave them ever an air of quaintness; and while the grand dames of Italy and France were wearing their hair all a-frizzle, the Dutch dame drew hers smoothly back and covered it with an exquisite cap. The modest cut of her gown was enhanced by the muslin kerchief trimmed with splendid Flanders Point, or the finer Gothic Points, the result of many weeks’ labour



## THE LACE BOOK

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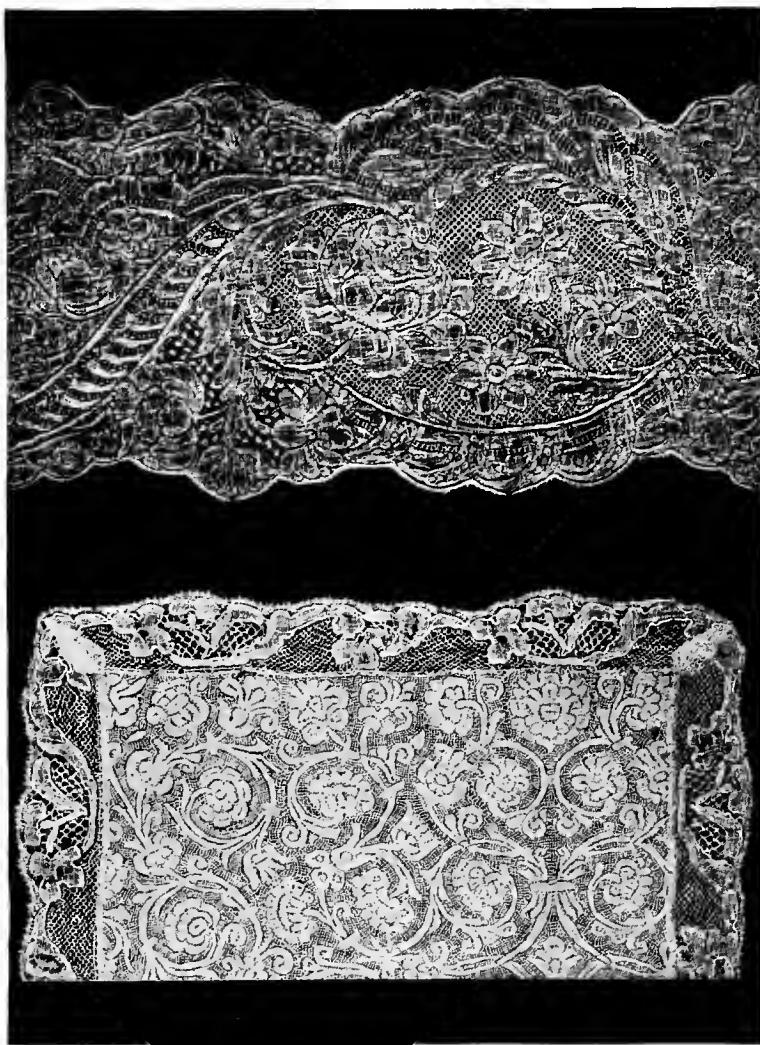
with the needle. The Dutch ladies and their sedate husbands live before us, to-day, in the magnificent portraits of such masters as Rembrandt, Van Dyck, and half a dozen others. Never again will such portraits be painted, since the era of magnificence in dress, at least for men, has taken its departure.

No less objects of pride to these exquisite housekeepers were the many cloths for shelves of dressers, mantel-shelves, tables, and other everyday articles. Most of these were lace-trimmed, with the rich and heavy products of bobbin and pillow, which could be so cheaply bought and were so durable. They had a dozen uses for lace which were quite peculiar to themselves, and some of them seem curious enough.

In 1807 Sir John Carr wrote his "Tour Through Holland," and, although a close observer, he has little to say about the manufacture of lace save at the *Béguinages*, where it still flourishes, and, curiously enough, also at the workhouses. The workhouse at Antwerp particularly claimed his attention, and he notes that its inmates were employed at making many varieties of the fabric. As some of the residents of this institution come from the best families, and are sent there for disobedience or insubordination of some sort, the choicest as well as the coarsest laces are made within its walls.

He also remarked at Leyden a curious use to which lace was put :

"As I was one day roving in this city, I was struck with the appearance of a small board ornamented with a considerable



**PLATE XXXVI.**—*A. "Fausse Valenciennes," bobbin lace. Belgium, Eighteenth Century.*  
*B. Fausse Valenciennes, edged with Trolly lace. Belgium, Seventeenth Century.*



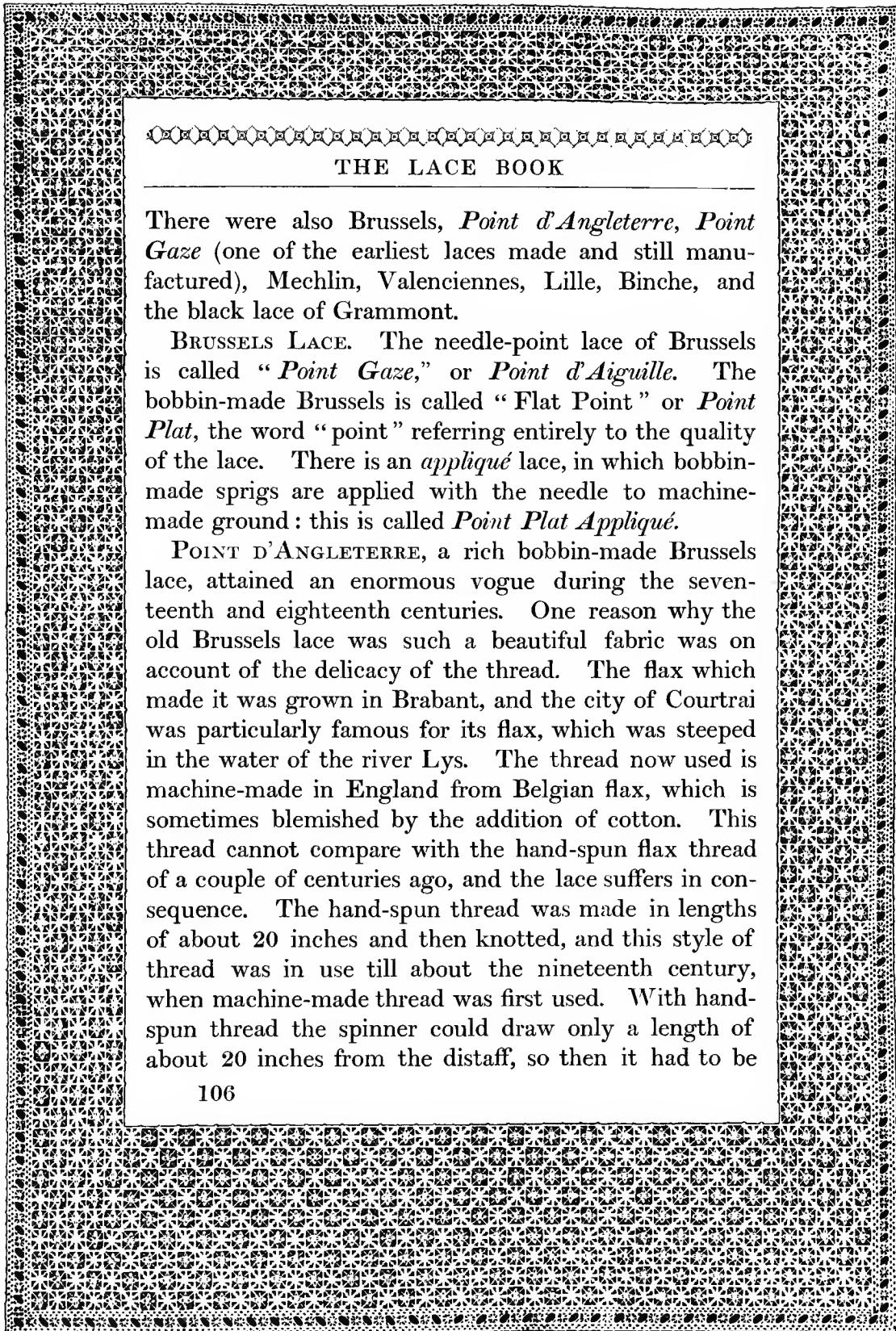
## FLEMISH LACE

quantity of lace, having an inscription on it, fastened on a house. Upon inquiry I found that the lady of the mansion where I saw it had lately lain in, and was then much indisposed, and that it was the custom of the country to expose this board, which contained an account of the state of the invalid's health, for the satisfaction of her inquiring friends, who were by this excellent plan informed of her situation without disturbing her by knocking at the door or by personal inquiries. The lace I found was never displayed but in lying-in cases. Without it this sort of bulletin is frequently used in cases of indisposition amongst persons of consequence."

The making of lace seems so natural to the people of the Low Countries that it appears to attract little attention from travellers who visited that country and recorded their impressions. No doubt the fact that it was largely made in homes has something to do with this neglect; for, while Flanders was undoubtedly the second lace-making country in the world, the written records of her achievements in this line are few and far between.

### *Reference List of Flemish Lace*

OLD FLANDERS POINT is the only original Belgian lace. All the other productions are imitations of the laces of other countries, some of them bettered, and all of them more cheaply made than in their native homes. The original Flanders lace was the variety known as *Trolle Kant*, a bobbin lace no longer made in its original pattern. The name "Trolly lace" has been transferred to England, and is given to a class of laces with grounds which resemble the Flemish *Trolle Kant* grounds, and which have a thick thread *cordonnet*.



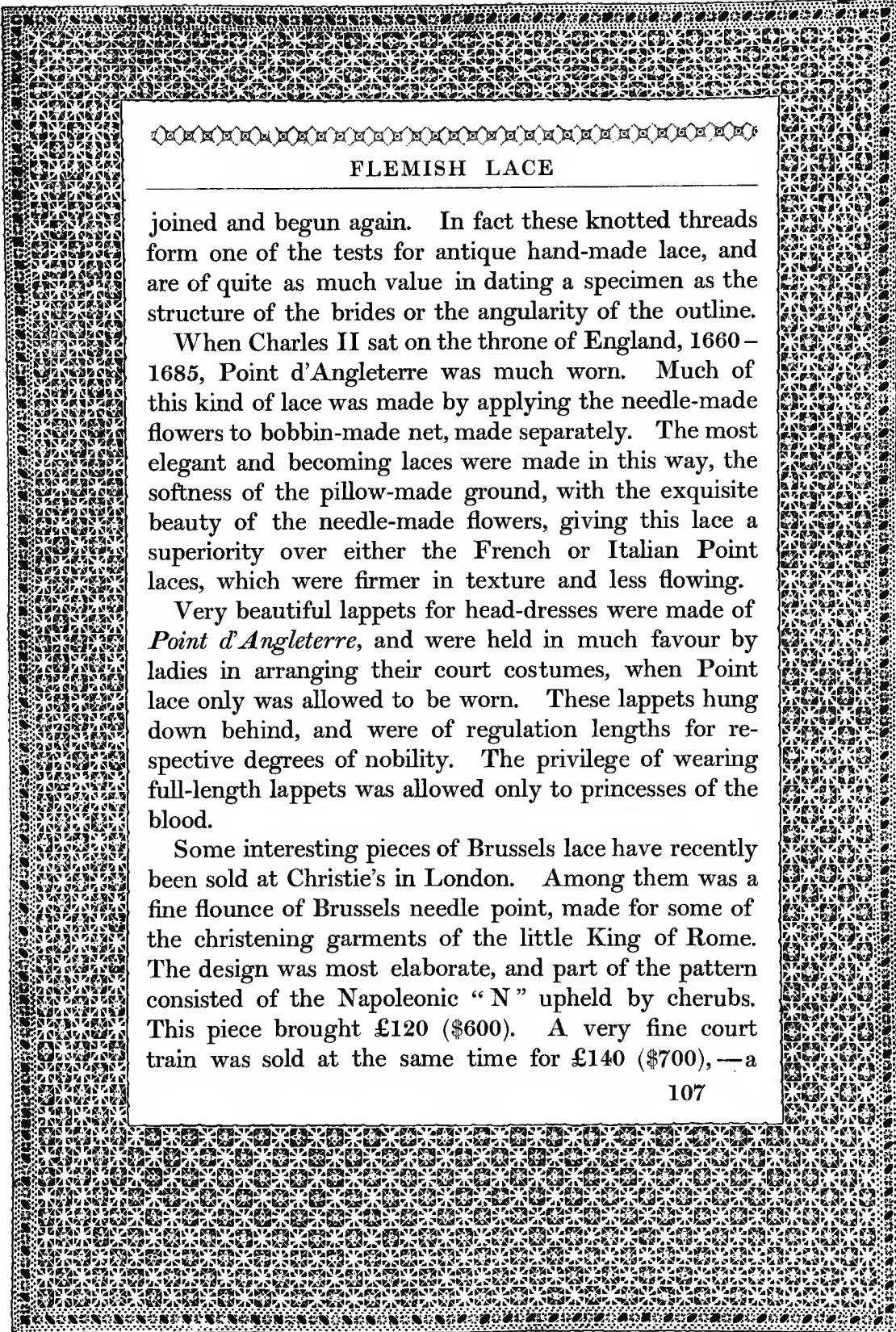
## THE LACE BOOK

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There were also Brussels, *Point d'Angleterre*, *Point Gaze* (one of the earliest laces made and still manufactured), Mechlin, Valenciennes, Lille, Binche, and the black lace of Grammont.

**BRUSSELS LACE.** The needle-point lace of Brussels is called “*Point Gaze*,” or *Point d'Aiguille*. The bobbin-made Brussels is called “Flat Point” or *Point Plat*, the word “point” referring entirely to the quality of the lace. There is an *appliquéd* lace, in which bobbin-made sprigs are applied with the needle to machine-made ground: this is called *Point Plat Appliquéd*.

**POINT D'ANGLETERRE**, a rich bobbin-made Brussels lace, attained an enormous vogue during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. One reason why the old Brussels lace was such a beautiful fabric was on account of the delicacy of the thread. The flax which made it was grown in Brabant, and the city of Courtrai was particularly famous for its flax, which was steeped in the water of the river Lys. The thread now used is machine-made in England from Belgian flax, which is sometimes blemished by the addition of cotton. This thread cannot compare with the hand-spun flax thread of a couple of centuries ago, and the lace suffers in consequence. The hand-spun thread was made in lengths of about 20 inches and then knotted, and this style of thread was in use till about the nineteenth century, when machine-made thread was first used. With hand-spun thread the spinner could draw only a length of about 20 inches from the distaff, so then it had to be



## FLEMISH LACE

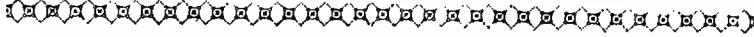
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joined and begun again. In fact these knotted threads form one of the tests for antique hand-made lace, and are of quite as much value in dating a specimen as the structure of the bides or the angularity of the outline.

When Charles II sat on the throne of England, 1660–1685, *Point d'Angleterre* was much worn. Much of this kind of lace was made by applying the needle-made flowers to bobbin-made net, made separately. The most elegant and becoming laces were made in this way, the softness of the pillow-made ground, with the exquisite beauty of the needle-made flowers, giving this lace a superiority over either the French or Italian *Point* laces, which were firmer in texture and less flowing.

Very beautiful lappets for head-dresses were made of *Point d'Angleterre*, and were held in much favour by ladies in arranging their court costumes, when *Point* lace only was allowed to be worn. These lappets hung down behind, and were of regulation lengths for respective degrees of nobility. The privilege of wearing full-length lappets was allowed only to princesses of the blood.

Some interesting pieces of Brussels lace have recently been sold at Christie's in London. Among them was a fine flounce of Brussels needle point, made for some of the christening garments of the little King of Rome. The design was most elaborate, and part of the pattern consisted of the Napoleonic "N" upheld by cherubs. This piece brought £120 (\$600). A very fine court train was sold at the same time for £140 (\$700), — a



## THE LACE BOOK

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small price considering its beauty and perfect condition. It measured 3 yards and 32 inches by 3 yards and 4 inches; the centre was filled with a design of leaves, and the border was composed of pansy and morning-glory flowers. A pair of old Brussels lappets reached £10 (\$50) and a small old veil with Prince of Wales feathers in the pattern brought £8 (\$40).

**BINCHE LACE** of the old make resembles the old Valenciennes very closely. Both the towns of Binche and Valenciennes are situated in the province of Hainault, and it was conquest at the end of the seventeenth century which gave the town of Valenciennes to France. Modern Binche lace is machine-made net with bobbin sprigs applied. In the old lace, which was called *Guipure de Binche*, the favourite grounds were the spider and rosette forms. Laces were made at Binche prior to 1686, since in that year they were subject to a royal edict. They were esteemed in France, where not only were there bedspreads, night-robés, and skirts of *Dentelle de Binche*, but "cuffs of three ranges," fichus and garnitures of the same lace. The designs are floral, covering well the whole extent of the pattern, and the groundwork is delicate and pretty, with more variety than the later Valenciennes patterns.

**MECHLIN LACE** has a place all its own, and at one time was so popular that it gave its name to all varieties of Flanders lace. After 1685 the laces from the different towns became known by their appropriate names, and the real "Mechlin, the finest lace of all," was often called



**P**LATE XXXVII.—Portrait of his daughter,  
by Albert Cuyp. Corsage trimmed with  
Flanders Point (1605-1691).



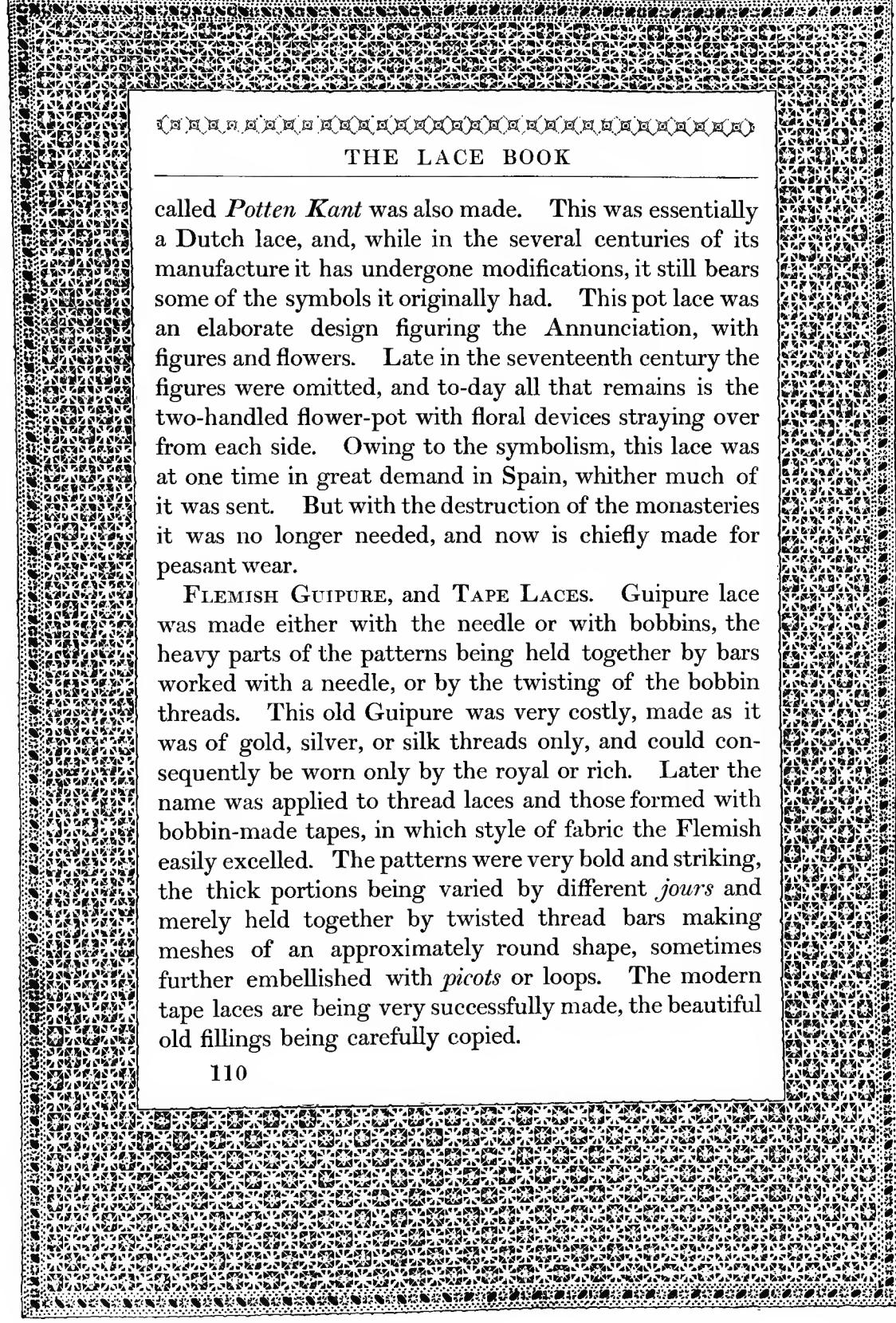
## FLEMISH LACE

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“the Queen of Lace.” It is a more transparent and delicate lace than Valenciennes, the flowers and ornaments being exquisitely filmy. It is charming when mounted on silks or satins of pale shades, and it was for such uses that it was esteemed. Before the meshed ground was decided on as the most desirable, the “snowy ground,” or *fond de neige*, was sometimes used. The ground ultimately used, a small hexagonal mesh with short and finely twisted sides, was very clear and pretty. This lace at the time of the Regency and Louis XV revelled in roccoco designs. These sobered down later, and while the borders retained their ornate character, with interlacing and delicate sprays which contained a variety of pretty fillings (*à jour*), the mesh body had little flowers, sprays, and sprigs scattered over it.

This pretty, graceful lace was much esteemed for trimmings and head-dresses. Many afternoon caps were carried gingerly about in boxes and baskets when our great-great-grandmothers went out for a social afternoon, and the lace most in vogue was old Mechlin. It achieved its greatest vogue before 1755, when its place for delicate trimmings was largely taken, at least in France, by silk Blonde.

**ANTWERP LACE.** When the rage for Mechlin lace was at its height, all the neighbourhood near Mechlin, Antwerp, and Louvain took to making it. As early as the seventeenth century the industry was started, and while Mechlin was the chief lace made there, a style

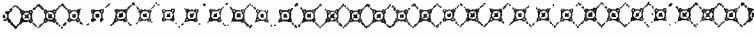


## THE LACE BOOK

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called *Potten Kant* was also made. This was essentially a Dutch lace, and, while in the several centuries of its manufacture it has undergone modifications, it still bears some of the symbols it originally had. This pot lace was an elaborate design figuring the Annunciation, with figures and flowers. Late in the seventeenth century the figures were omitted, and to-day all that remains is the two-handled flower-pot with floral devices straying over from each side. Owing to the symbolism, this lace was at one time in great demand in Spain, whither much of it was sent. But with the destruction of the monasteries it was no longer needed, and now is chiefly made for peasant wear.

**FLEMISH GUIPURE, and TAPE LACES.** Guipure lace was made either with the needle or with bobbins, the heavy parts of the patterns being held together by bars worked with a needle, or by the twisting of the bobbin threads. This old Guipure was very costly, made as it was of gold, silver, or silk threads only, and could consequently be worn only by the royal or rich. Later the name was applied to thread laces and those formed with bobbin-made tapes, in which style of fabric the Flemish easily excelled. The patterns were very bold and striking, the thick portions being varied by different *jours* and merely held together by twisted thread bars making meshes of an approximately round shape, sometimes further embellished with *picots* or loops. The modern tape laces are being very successfully made, the beautiful old fillings being carefully copied.



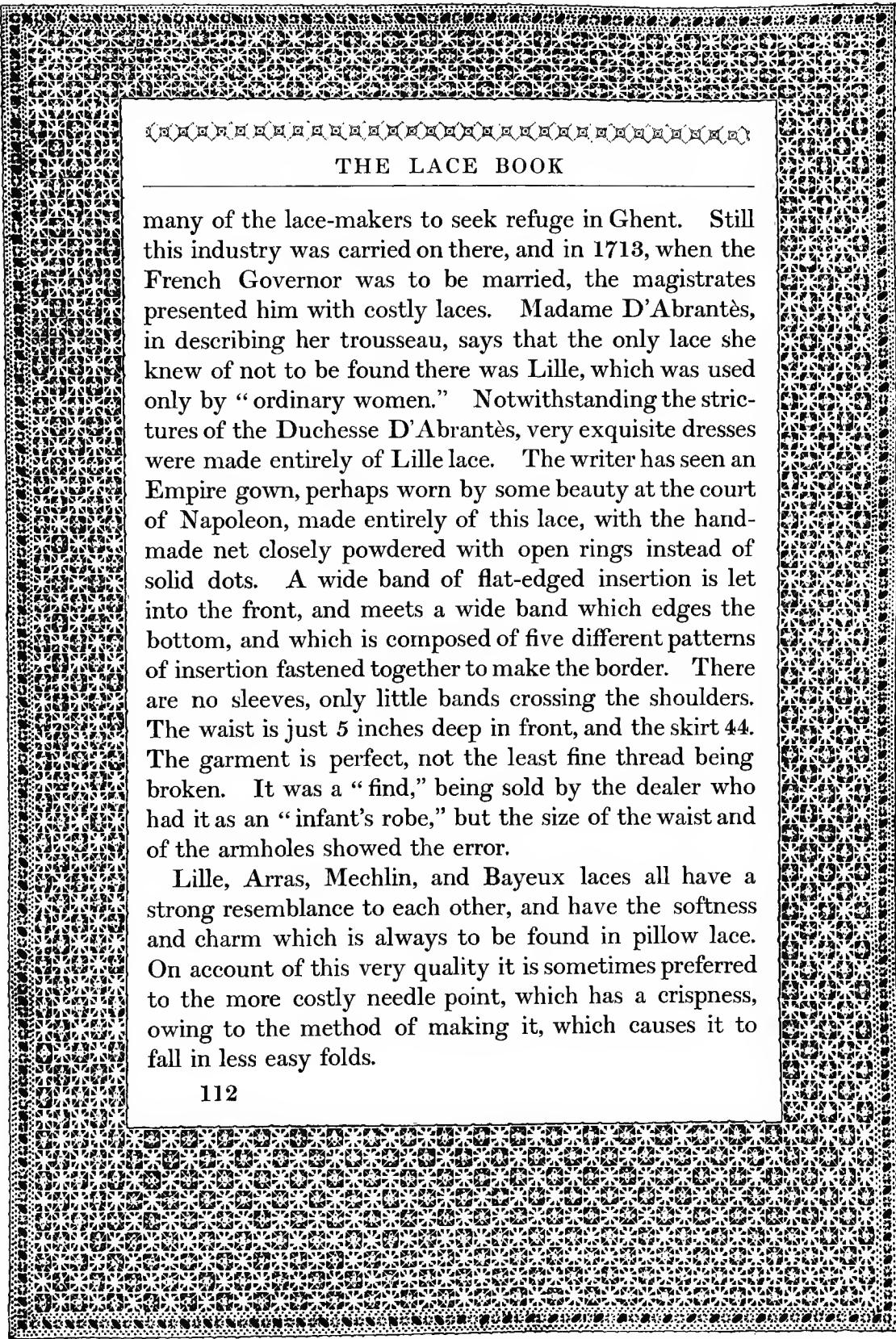
## FLEMISH LACE

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These modern tape laces follow, as did the ancient ones, a style of work which was confined to the Netherlands. It was invented by them, and its peculiar characteristics—the use of the fine Flanders thread and the close and regular weaving of the tape—have never been copied. Flemish bobbin lace used frequently to be called *Guipure de Flandre*, to distinguish it from the needle-point laces.

**LILLE LACE.** About the middle of the sixteenth century Lille was not behind her sister cities of the Netherlands in making fine lace. Like so much of the other Flemish lace, her chief product was bobbin-made, and its most marked peculiarity was the ground, a clear simple network upon which the pattern, outlined with a heavy thread, stood out in good contrast. The Lille lace was similar to that of Arras, and the grounds of both were formed by crossing the threads of two sides of the hexagonal mesh and twisting together the two threads on the other four sides. The clear ground of the Lille and Arras laces made them admirable for trimmings when gathered or ruffled up on fichus, kerchiefs, or nightcaps. The more modern laces, however, had grounds powdered with dots or little sprigs, and, while formerly made in both black and white, are now made in white only.

By the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle Lille was transferred to France, and then, after being retaken by Prince Eugene and enjoying a period of Flemish rule once more, it was again ceded to France by the Peace of Utrecht. These changes in government had caused



## THE LACE BOOK

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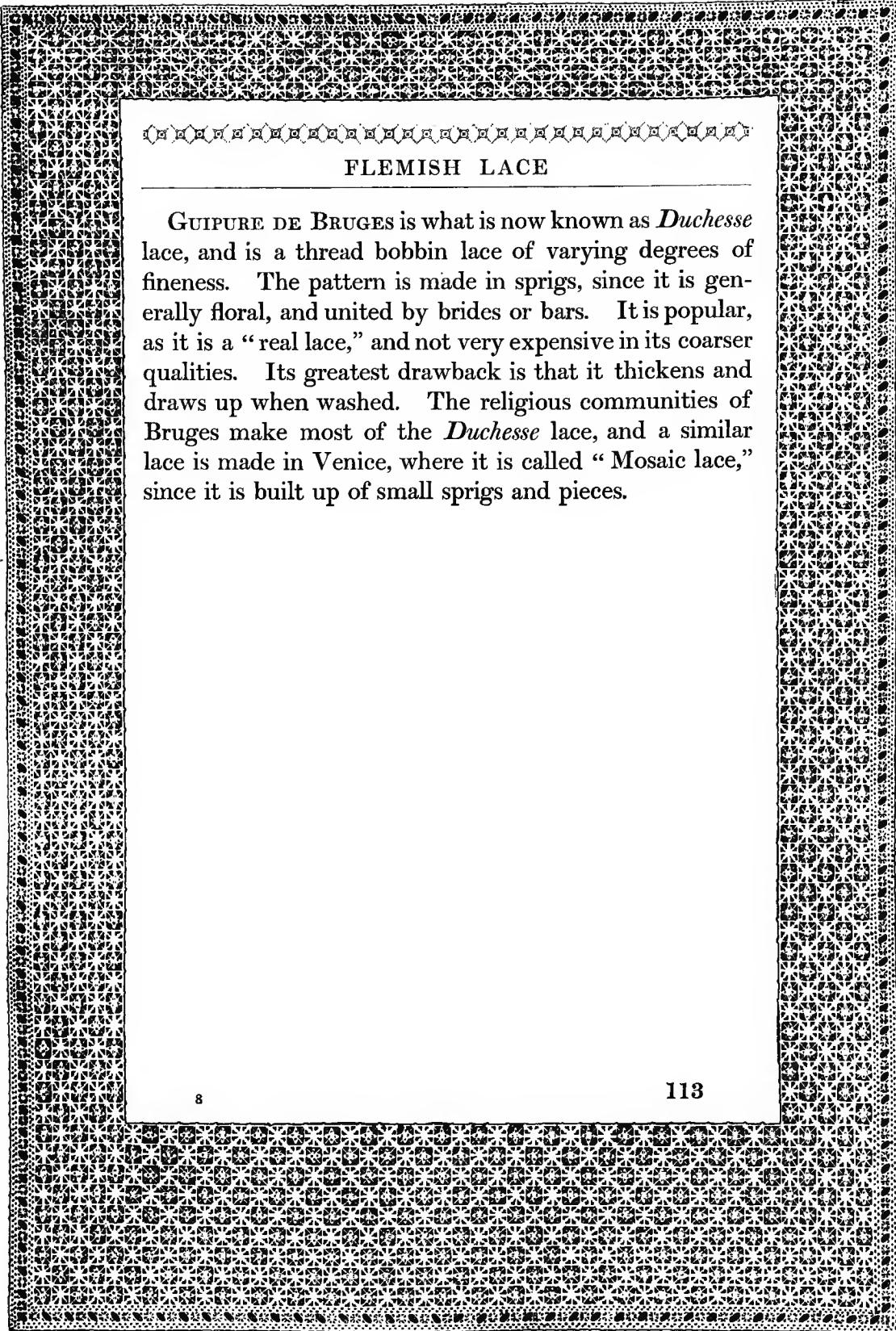
many of the lace-makers to seek refuge in Ghent. Still this industry was carried on there, and in 1713, when the French Governor was to be married, the magistrates presented him with costly laces. Madame D'Abrantès, in describing her trousseau, says that the only lace she knew of not to be found there was Lille, which was used only by "ordinary women." Notwithstanding the strictures of the Duchesse D'Abrantès, very exquisite dresses were made entirely of Lille lace. The writer has seen an Empire gown, perhaps worn by some beauty at the court of Napoleon, made entirely of this lace, with the hand-made net closely powdered with open rings instead of solid dots. A wide band of flat-edged insertion is let into the front, and meets a wide band which edges the bottom, and which is composed of five different patterns of insertion fastened together to make the border. There are no sleeves, only little bands crossing the shoulders. The waist is just 5 inches deep in front, and the skirt 44. The garment is perfect, not the least fine thread being broken. It was a "find," being sold by the dealer who had it as an "infant's robe," but the size of the waist and of the armholes showed the error.

Lille, Arras, Mechlin, and Bayeux laces all have a strong resemblance to each other, and have the softness and charm which is always to be found in pillow lace. On account of this very quality it is sometimes preferred to the more costly needle point, which has a crispness, owing to the method of making it, which causes it to fall in less easy folds.



**PLATE XXXVIII.**—*Duchesse de Nemours.*  
*Flounces of Point Appliquéd. Portrait by*  
*Winterhalter.*



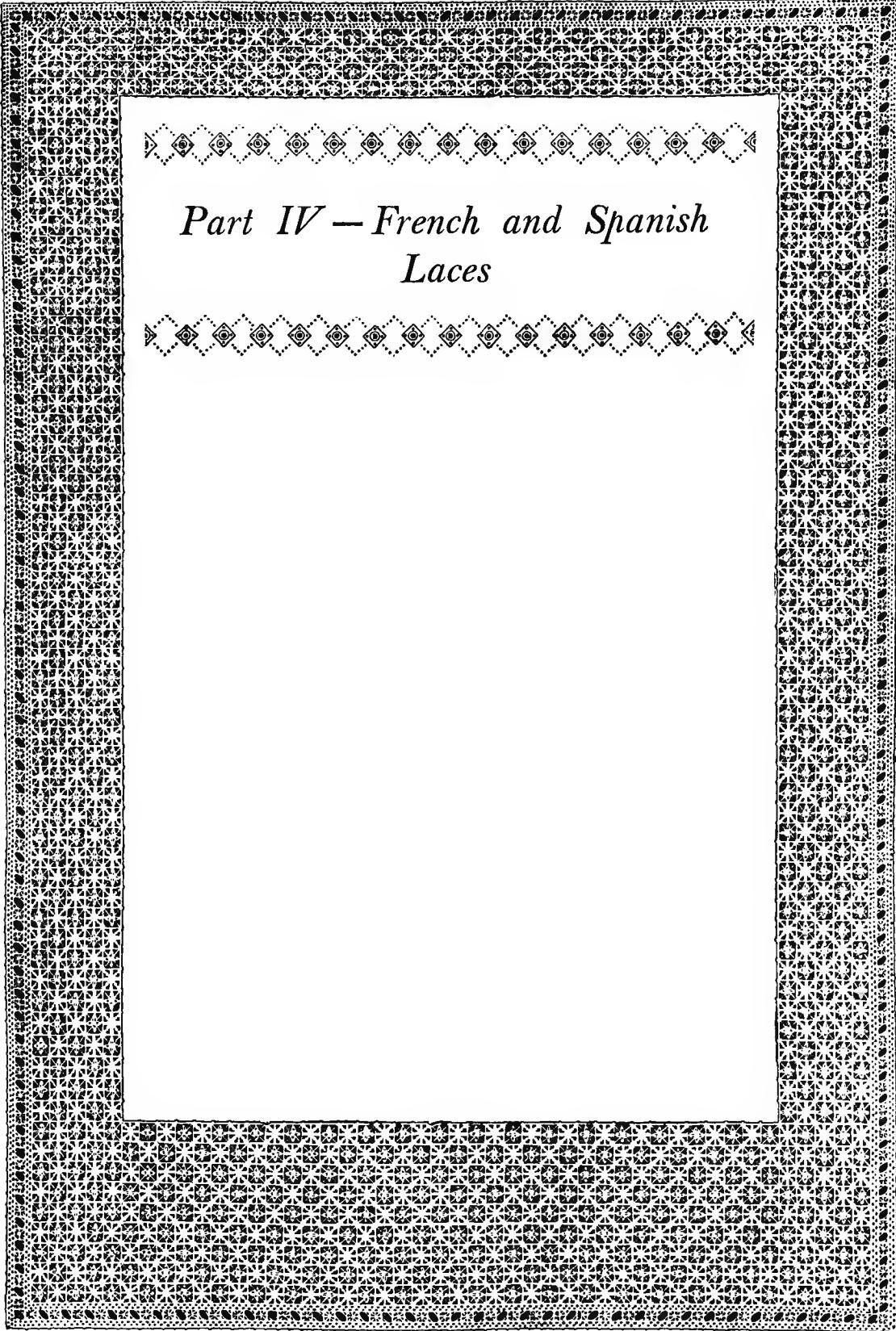


## FLEMISH LACE

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GUIPURE DE BRUGES is what is now known as *Duchesse* lace, and is a thread bobbin lace of varying degrees of fineness. The pattern is made in sprigs, since it is generally floral, and united by brides or bars. It is popular, as it is a "real lace," and not very expensive in its coarser qualities. Its greatest drawback is that it thickens and draws up when washed. The religious communities of Bruges make most of the *Duchesse* lace, and a similar lace is made in Venice, where it is called "Mosaic lace," since it is built up of small sprigs and pieces.





*Part IV — French and Spanish  
Laces*

“ *Item*, five handkerchiefs worked with gold, silver, and silk, valued at one hundred crowns.

“ *Item*, two towels, also worked with gold and silver, and appraised at one hundred crowns.

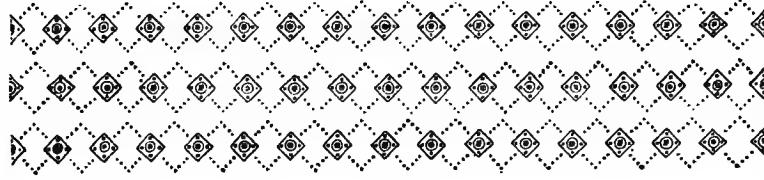
“ *Item*, three towels of white drawn-work, valued altogether at thirty crowns.

“ *Item*, one pair of cuffs of cut-work enriched with silver, valued at twenty crowns.

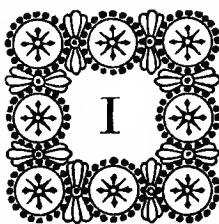
“ *Item*, two white handkerchiefs of cut-work, valued together at twenty crowns.

“ All these towels and handkerchiefs, which were found in the little coffer which the said defunct lady usually carried with her to Court, are remaining in the hands of Sieur de Beringhen, according to the command of His Majesty, to whom she had promised these things should be returned.”

—*Inventory After the Death of Gabrielle d'Estrées, 1599.*



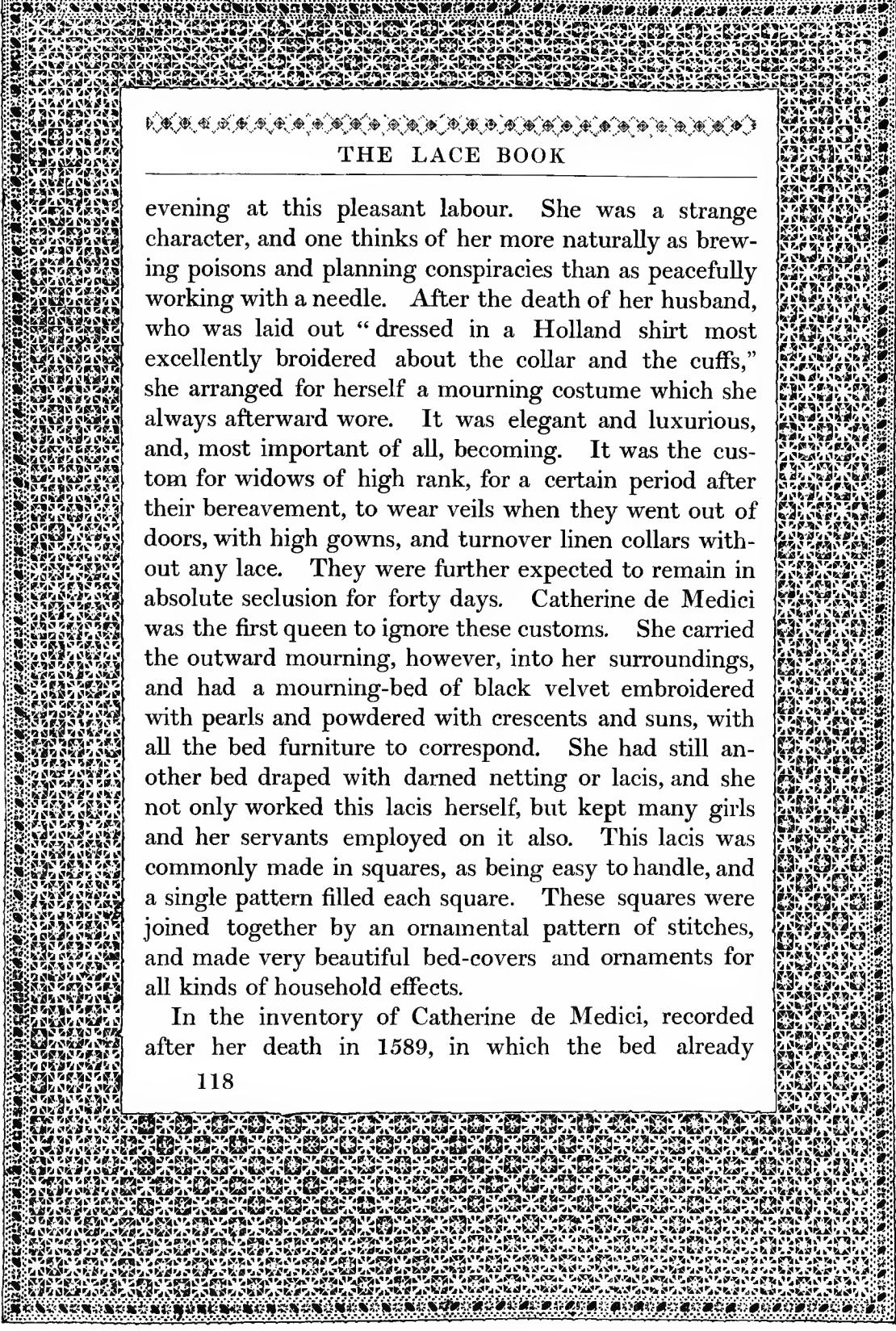
## Part IV—French and Spanish Laces



T was Colbert who said that “Fashion is to France what the Mines of Peru are to Spain,”— and then he proceeded to make good the saying.

While it remains true that for years and years Italy was the arbiter of fashions, France under the Medicis and Valois sparkled with gold and jewels and rippled in costly laces. Cloth of gold and cloth of silver, further enriched by embroidery, jewels, and the richest lace to be had, were not too elegant for both men’s and women’s wear. Clouet’s portraits show how very insignificant the early laces were, mere edgings of little beauty. They were mounted on starched and plaited linen ruffs, called *retondes*. Spanish capes and *collets montés*, as well as chemisettes, called *gorgias*, that covered neck and shoulders, were also worn in the time of Catherine de Medici.

The drawn-work was handsome, and in that or lacis or darned netting the workers of the period excelled. Catherine de Medici herself was an indefatigable worker in embroideries and cut-work, and passed many an



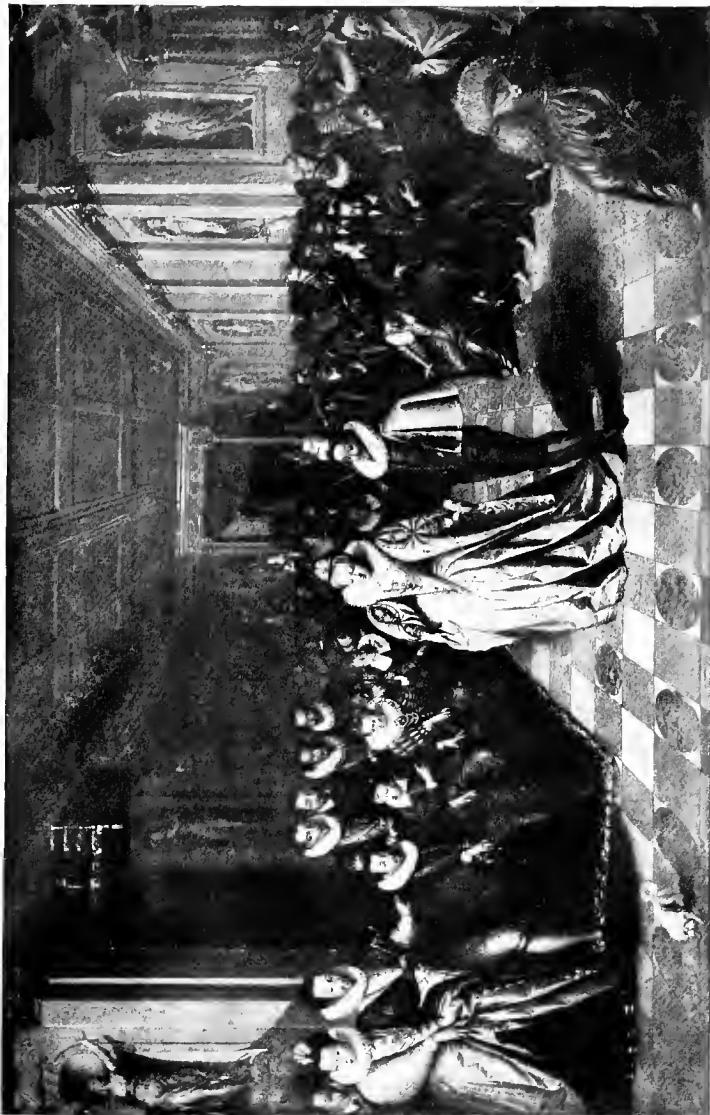
## THE LACE BOOK

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evening at this pleasant labour. She was a strange character, and one thinks of her more naturally as brewing poisons and planning conspiracies than as peacefully working with a needle. After the death of her husband, who was laid out "dressed in a Holland shirt most excellently broidered about the collar and the cuffs," she arranged for herself a mourning costume which she always afterward wore. It was elegant and luxurious, and, most important of all, becoming. It was the custom for widows of high rank, for a certain period after their bereavement, to wear veils when they went out of doors, with high gowns, and turnover linen collars without any lace. They were further expected to remain in absolute seclusion for forty days. Catherine de Medici was the first queen to ignore these customs. She carried the outward mourning, however, into her surroundings, and had a mourning-bed of black velvet embroidered with pearls and powdered with crescents and suns, with all the bed furniture to correspond. She had still another bed draped with darned netting or lacis, and she not only worked this lacis herself, but kept many girls and her servants employed on it also. This lacis was commonly made in squares, as being easy to handle, and a single pattern filled each square. These squares were joined together by an ornamental pattern of stitches, and made very beautiful bed-covers and ornaments for all kinds of household effects.

In the inventory of Catherine de Medici, recorded after her death in 1589, in which the bed already

**PLATE XXIX.**—Court hall in *reign of Henry III of France (1551-1589).* Showing extravagance of richis.





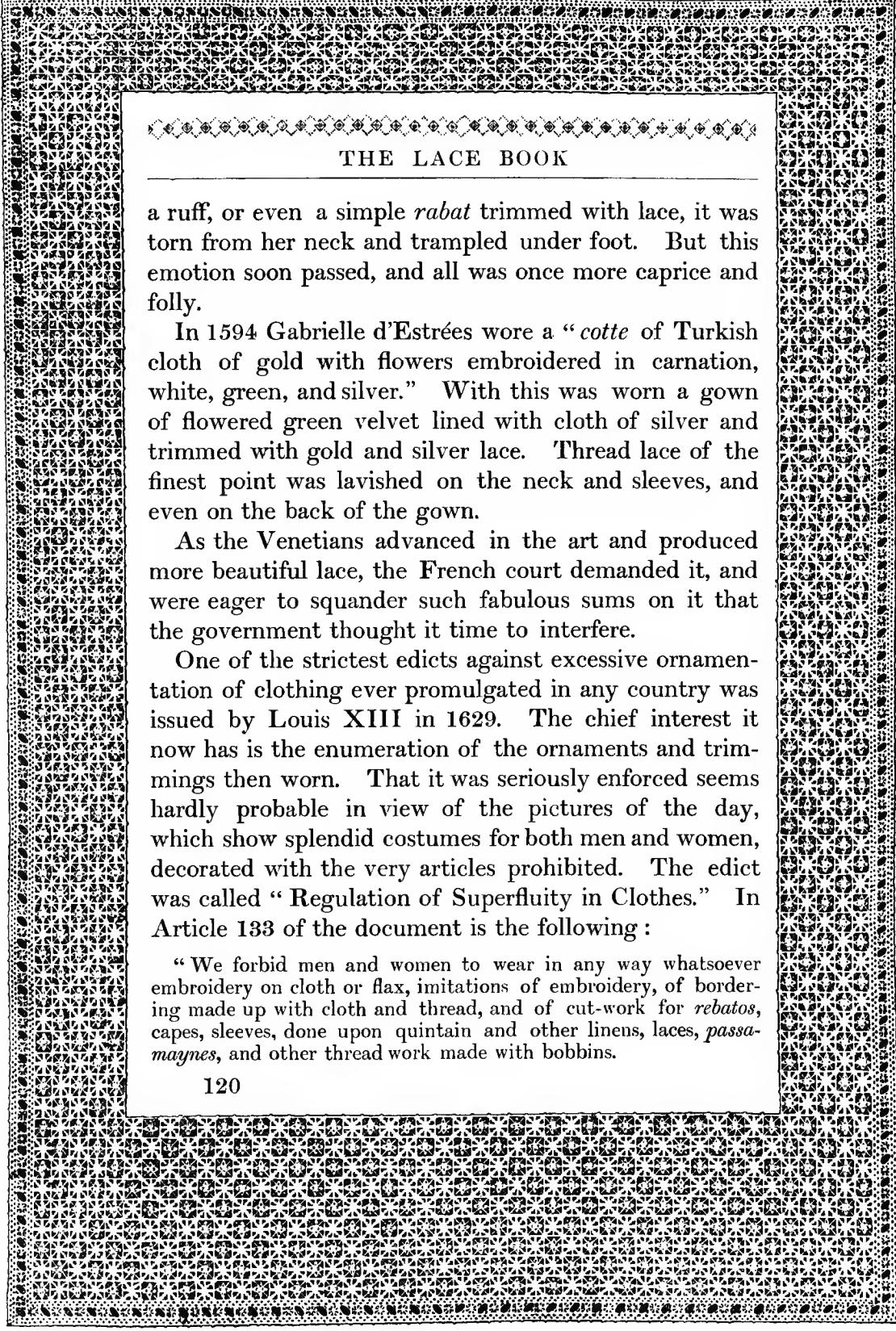
## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

mentioned is carefully described, there are also enumerated two coffers, in one of which were 381 of these lacis squares, unmounted, and in the "other were 538 squares, some worked with rosettes or with blossoms, and others with nosegays."

In 1559, when Margaret of Savoy was married, her trousseau contained gold-embroidered dresses and quantities of jewels and lace. The bridal dress was yellow satin, with the bodice embroidered in jewels and gold. Her mantle was trimmed with lace a foot wide, and she had in addition a cloak of cloth of silver trimmed with lynx fur.

By 1579 the ruffs worn at the French court had become preposterous, so large that the simple function of eating was almost an impossibility, and so full that twelve lengths or yards of material were easily tortured into one of them. They were worn by men and women alike, and the grotesque effect presented by a company wearing these monstrosities is shown in many pictures of the period, but they were pleasing to both Catholic and Huguenot alike. The court ladies not only wore what laces there were,—*Point Coupé*, Drawn Work and Darned Net, but they made it also.

Fashion usually holds her sway undisputed, no matter what political upheavals take place. There was an exception to this rule in 1583, immediately after the murder of the Duc de Guise at the *États de Blois*. Deep mourning only was worn, no gay or fashionable costume was tolerated. If a *demoiselle* was seen wearing



## THE LACE BOOK

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a ruff, or even a simple *rabat* trimmed with lace, it was torn from her neck and trampled under foot. But this emotion soon passed, and all was once more caprice and folly.

In 1594 Gabrielle d'Estrées wore a “*cotte* of Turkish cloth of gold with flowers embroidered in carnation, white, green, and silver.” With this was worn a gown of flowered green velvet lined with cloth of silver and trimmed with gold and silver lace. Thread lace of the finest point was lavished on the neck and sleeves, and even on the back of the gown.

As the Venetians advanced in the art and produced more beautiful lace, the French court demanded it, and were eager to squander such fabulous sums on it that the government thought it time to interfere.

One of the strictest edicts against excessive ornamentation of clothing ever promulgated in any country was issued by Louis XIII in 1629. The chief interest it now has is the enumeration of the ornaments and trimmings then worn. That it was seriously enforced seems hardly probable in view of the pictures of the day, which show splendid costumes for both men and women, decorated with the very articles prohibited. The edict was called “Regulation of Superfluity in Clothes.” In Article 133 of the document is the following :

“We forbid men and women to wear in any way whatsoever embroidery on cloth or flax, imitations of embroidery, of bordering made up with cloth and thread, and of cut-work for *rebatos*, capes, sleeves, done upon quintain and other linens, laces, *passamaynes*, and other thread work made with bobbins.

## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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“And we forbid the use of all other ornaments upon capes, sleeves, and other linen garments, save trimmings, cut-work, and laces manufactured in this country which do not exceed at most the price of 75 livres the ell, that is, for the band and its trimming together, without evasion ; upon pain of confiscation of the aforesaid capes, chainworks, collars, hats, and mantles which may be found upon offending persons ; as well as the coaches and horses which may be found similarly bedecked.”

Under this same monarch lace handkerchiefs and lace-trimmed garments were prohibited to all classes below the nobles. Those under the ban dared not openly defy the decree, so they wore bunches of ribbons and streamers to supply the deficiency. These streamers became known as *galants*.

Scarfs trimmed with lace came into fashion in 1656, and formed a very graceful adjunct to ladies' attire. They did not meet with the approval of all classes, however, for some disbanded soldiers roaming through the streets of Paris amused themselves by snatching these scarfs from the ladies' shoulders, claiming that it was against the law to wear them. After half a dozen of these offenders had been hanged by the police, the nuisance abated, and scarfs were once more worn in peace. During the carnival of 1659, we are told by Mdlle de Montpensier, —

—“the court masqueraded in delightful fashion. On one occasion Monsieur, Mdlle de Villeroy, Mdlle de Gourden, and I wore cloth of silver with rose-coloured braid, black-velvet aprons, and stomachachers trimmed with gold and silver lace. Our dresses were cut like those of the Bresse peasants, with collars and cuffs of yellow cloth in the same style, but of finer quality and edged with Venetian lace.”

## THE LACE BOOK

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When Colbert came on the scene he profited by the knowledge that the edicts issued by the Valois kings had been evaded in every way, and that the prohibitions of Louis XIII had met with small effect. So, to gain his object of preserving to France her own revenues, he set about the matter in quite a different fashion. To be sure he was at first much hampered by Mazarin, who was not so deeply concerned in stimulating the industries of France but that he could buy and wear both Flanders and Italian laces. But in 1661 Mazarin died, and after this the Minister of Finance was able to take the place he desired in the administration.

Our interest is chiefly concerned in his attitude toward the lace industry, but this was only one of the objects he had in his active mind. Other new industries were started, workmen skilled in every branch of labour were invited to settle in France, inventors were encouraged and protected, and French workmen were absolutely prohibited from emigrating.

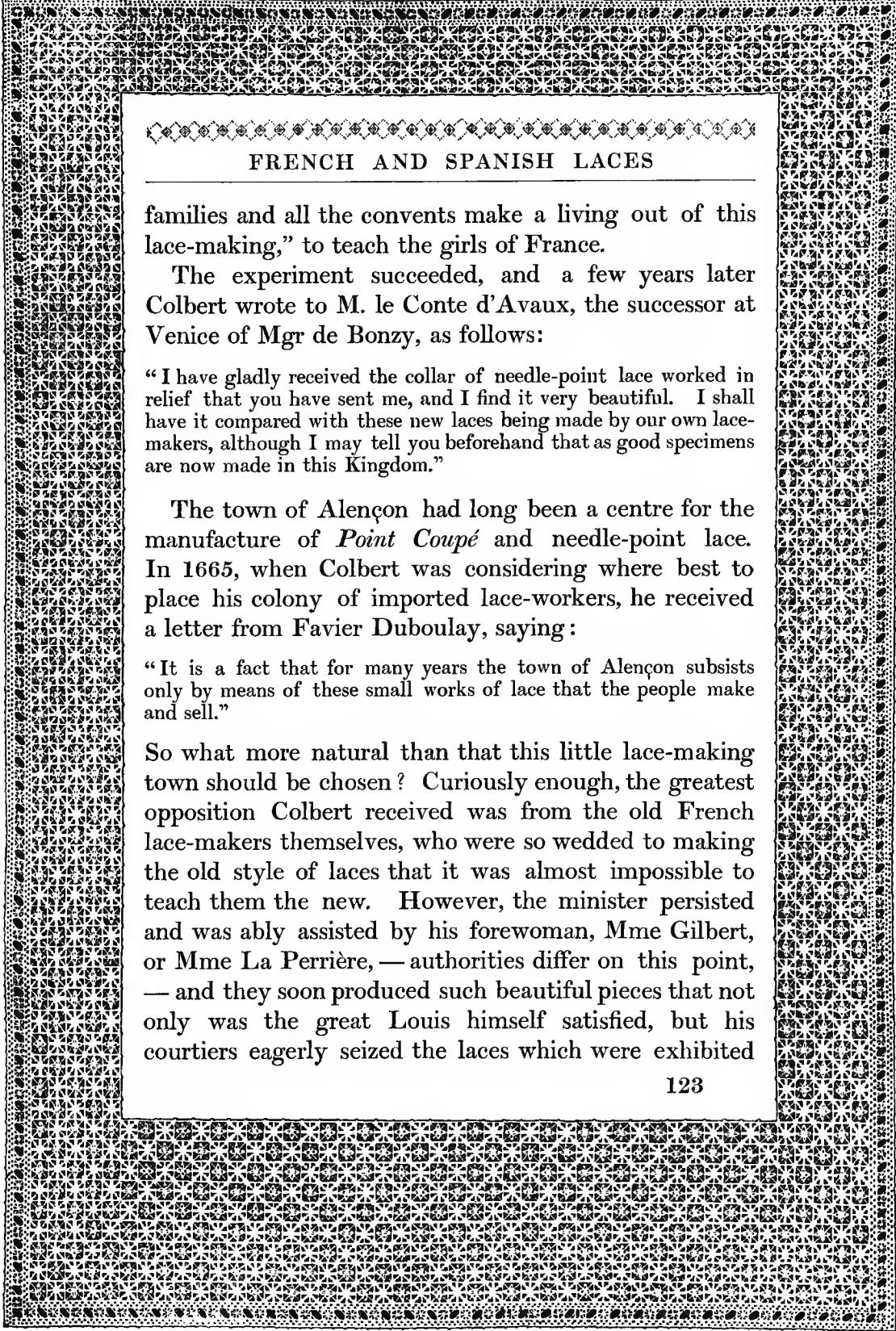
He conceived the idea of bringing to France skilled workwomen, so that French lace should rival that of Italy and Flanders, reporting to the King that "there will always be found fools enough to purchase the manufactures of France, though France should be prohibited from purchasing those of other countries."

To learn how best to accomplish his object he applied to the French Ambassador at Venice, Monseigneur de Bonzy, Bishop of Beziero. This prelate recommended sending some women from Venice, where "all the poor



**PLATE XL.**—*Claudia (1547-1575), daughter of Henry II and Catherine de Medici. Ruff and chemisette of drawn-work edged with purling. One of the earliest French portraits showing lace. Painted by Clouet.*





## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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families and all the convents make a living out of this lace-making," to teach the girls of France.

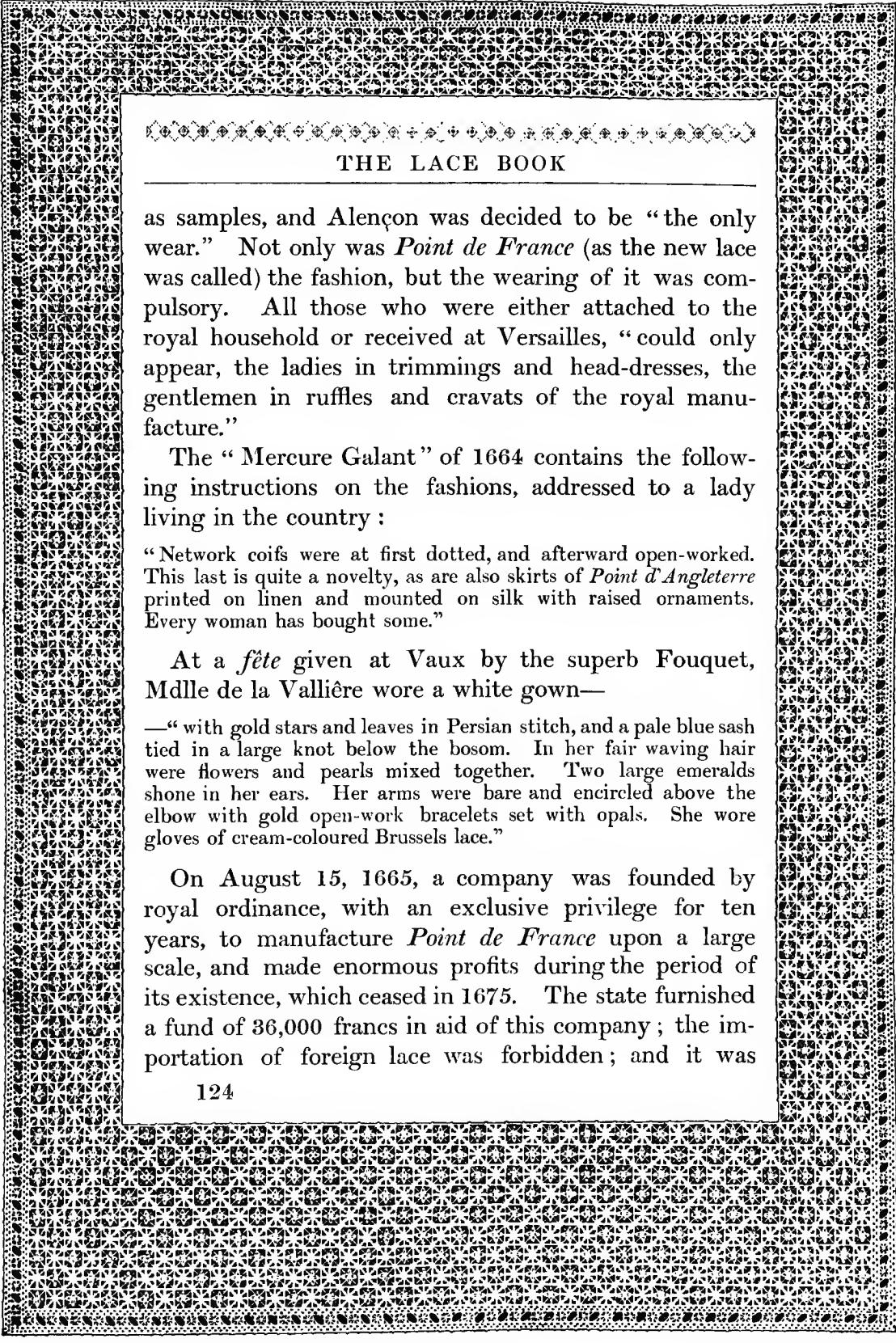
The experiment succeeded, and a few years later Colbert wrote to M. le Conte d'Avaux, the successor at Venice of Mgr de Bonzy, as follows:

"I have gladly received the collar of needle-point lace worked in relief that you have sent me, and I find it very beautiful. I shall have it compared with these new laces being made by our own lace-makers, although I may tell you beforehand that as good specimens are now made in this Kingdom."

The town of Alençon had long been a centre for the manufacture of *Point Coupé* and needle-point lace. In 1665, when Colbert was considering where best to place his colony of imported lace-workers, he received a letter from Favier Duboulay, saying :

"It is a fact that for many years the town of Alençon subsists only by means of these small works of lace that the people make and sell."

So what more natural than that this little lace-making town should be chosen? Curiously enough, the greatest opposition Colbert received was from the old French lace-makers themselves, who were so wedded to making the old style of laces that it was almost impossible to teach them the new. However, the minister persisted and was ably assisted by his forewoman, Mme Gilbert, or Mme La Perrière,—authorities differ on this point,—and they soon produced such beautiful pieces that not only was the great Louis himself satisfied, but his courtiers eagerly seized the laces which were exhibited



## THE LACE BOOK

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as samples, and Alençon was decided to be “the only wear.” Not only was *Point de France* (as the new lace was called) the fashion, but the wearing of it was compulsory. All those who were either attached to the royal household or received at Versailles, “could only appear, the ladies in trimmings and head-dresses, the gentlemen in ruffles and cravats of the royal manufacture.”

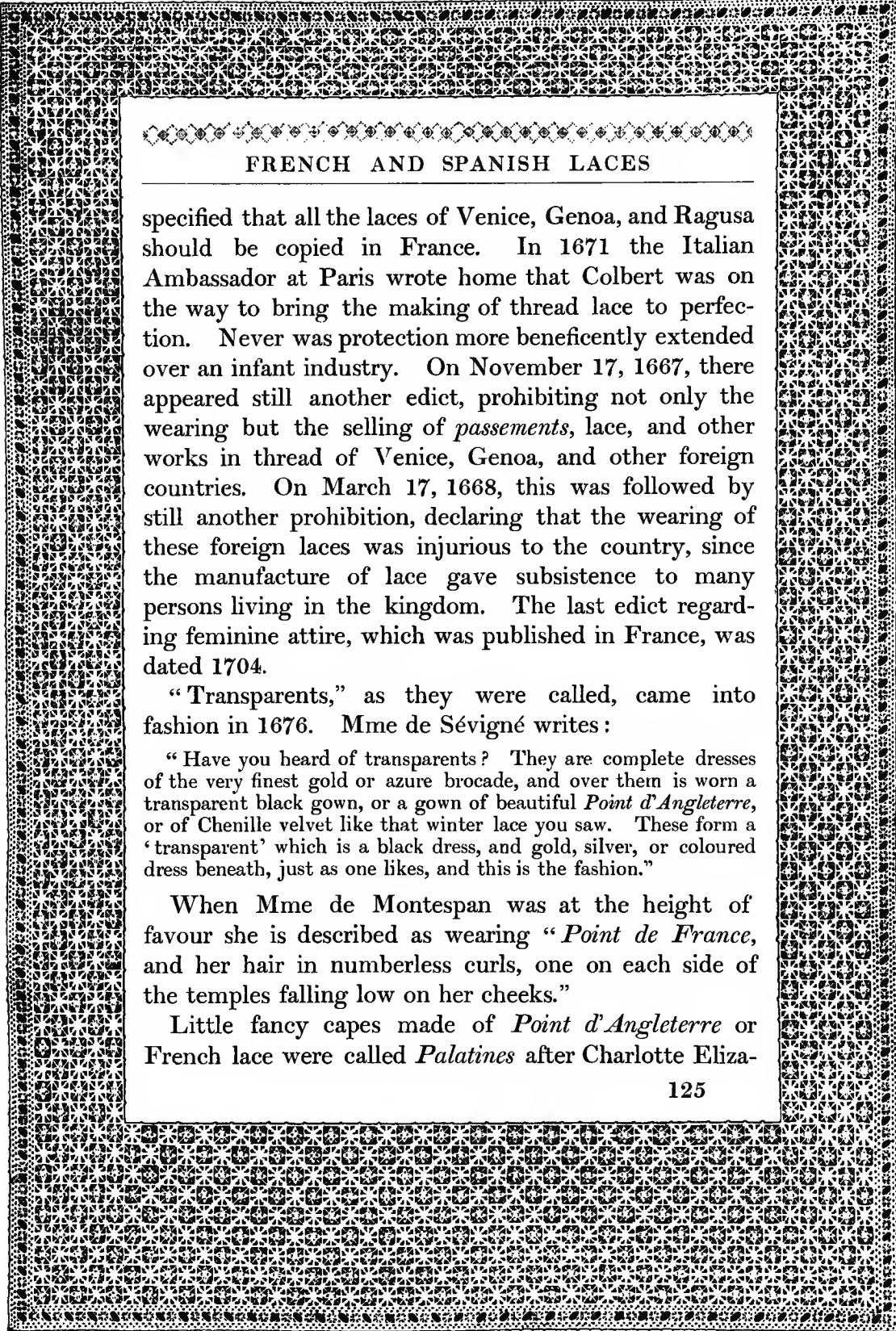
The “*Mercure Galant*” of 1664 contains the following instructions on the fashions, addressed to a lady living in the country :

“Network coifs were at first dotted, and afterward open-worked. This last is quite a novelty, as are also skirts of *Point d'Angleterre* printed on linen and mounted on silk with raised ornaments. Every woman has bought some.”

At a *fête* given at Vaux by the superb Fouquet, Mdlle de la Vallière wore a white gown—

—“with gold stars and leaves in Persian stitch, and a pale blue sash tied in a large knot below the bosom. In her fair waving hair were flowers and pearls mixed together. Two large emeralds shone in her ears. Her arms were bare and encircled above the elbow with gold open-work bracelets set with opals. She wore gloves of cream-coloured Brussels lace.”

On August 15, 1665, a company was founded by royal ordinance, with an exclusive privilege for ten years, to manufacture *Point de France* upon a large scale, and made enormous profits during the period of its existence, which ceased in 1675. The state furnished a fund of 36,000 francs in aid of this company ; the importation of foreign lace was forbidden ; and it was



## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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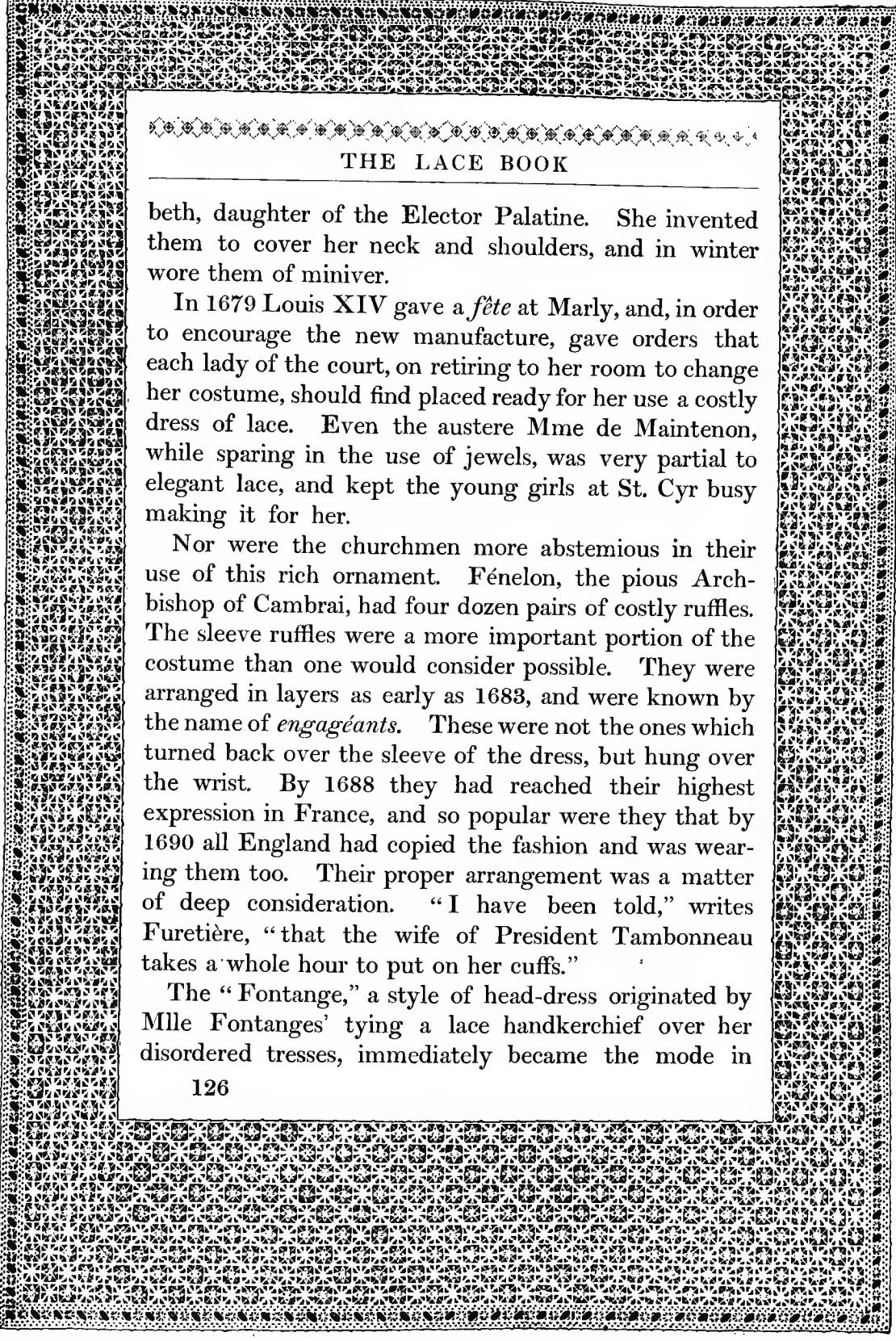
specified that all the laces of Venice, Genoa, and Ragusa should be copied in France. In 1671 the Italian Ambassador at Paris wrote home that Colbert was on the way to bring the making of thread lace to perfection. Never was protection more beneficially extended over an infant industry. On November 17, 1667, there appeared still another edict, prohibiting not only the wearing but the selling of *passéments*, lace, and other works in thread of Venice, Genoa, and other foreign countries. On March 17, 1668, this was followed by still another prohibition, declaring that the wearing of these foreign laces was injurious to the country, since the manufacture of lace gave subsistence to many persons living in the kingdom. The last edict regarding feminine attire, which was published in France, was dated 1704.

“Transparents,” as they were called, came into fashion in 1676. Mme de Sévigné writes:

“Have you heard of transparents? They are complete dresses of the very finest gold or azure brocade, and over them is worn a transparent black gown, or a gown of beautiful *Point d'Angleterre*, or of Chenille velvet like that winter lace you saw. These form a ‘transparent’ which is a black dress, and gold, silver, or coloured dress beneath, just as one likes, and this is the fashion.”

When Mme de Montespan was at the height of favour she is described as wearing “*Point de France*, and her hair in numberless curls, one on each side of the temples falling low on her cheeks.”

Little fancy capes made of *Point d'Angleterre* or French lace were called *Palatines* after Charlotte Eliza-



## THE LACE BOOK

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beth, daughter of the Elector Palatine. She invented them to cover her neck and shoulders, and in winter wore them of miniver.

In 1679 Louis XIV gave a *fête* at Marly, and, in order to encourage the new manufacture, gave orders that each lady of the court, on retiring to her room to change her costume, should find placed ready for her use a costly dress of lace. Even the austere Mme de Maintenon, while sparing in the use of jewels, was very partial to elegant lace, and kept the young girls at St. Cyr busy making it for her.

Nor were the churchmen more abstemious in their use of this rich ornament. Fénelon, the pious Archbishop of Cambrai, had four dozen pairs of costly ruffles. The sleeve ruffles were a more important portion of the costume than one would consider possible. They were arranged in layers as early as 1683, and were known by the name of *engagéants*. These were not the ones which turned back over the sleeve of the dress, but hung over the wrist. By 1688 they had reached their highest expression in France, and so popular were they that by 1690 all England had copied the fashion and was wearing them too. Their proper arrangement was a matter of deep consideration. "I have been told," writes Furetière, "that the wife of President Tambonneau takes a whole hour to put on her cuffs."

The "Fontange," a style of head-dress originated by Mlle Fontanges' tying a lace handkerchief over her disordered tresses, immediately became the mode in



**P**LATE XLI.—James Stuart (1688-1766), and his sister Louisa. He wears a cravat of Point de France. The front of her gown, sleeve ruffles, and cap, called a “Fontange,” are of the same lace. *Portrait by Largillière.*



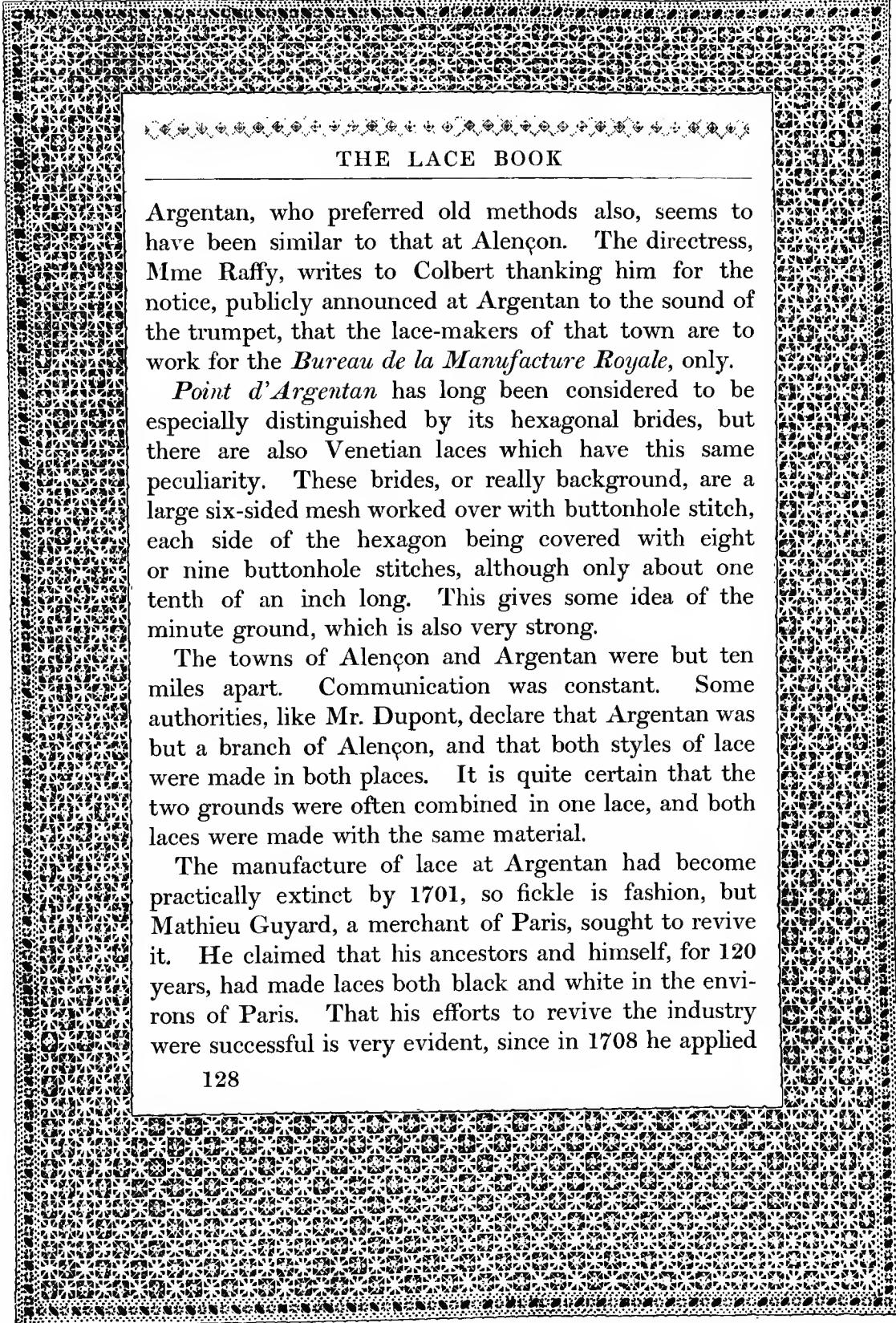
## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

England as well as in France. It held its position for ten years, till 1699, and from its modest beginnings grew to be an immense tower. In its perfected state it was composed of pieces of gummed linen rolled into circular bands and used for keeping in place the bows, ribbons, feathers, lace, and jewelled ornaments of which this head-dress, also called the *commode*, was composed. Even little girls, who both at this and subsequent periods were but miniature copies of their mothers, had these huge structures mounted on their heads.

The earliest of the *Points de France* were merely replicas of the Italian laces, and many of the pictures of Colbert himself show him in a cravat which closely resembles *Point de Venise*.

The old Burano laces and early Alençon resemble each other very closely, but little by little France created a fabric of her own. *Point d'Alençon* soon became known as the variety of lace produced at that town. The designs used under Louis XIV are flowing, ornamented with flowers and garlands, horns of plenty, and sheaves. Under the reign of Louis XV they remained much the same, with garlands curiously interwoven, into which were worked patterns of different stitches, the whole presenting a wreathed and garlanded effect of great beauty.

At about the same time that the manufacture of *Point de France* was begun at Alençon there was established at Argentan a similar *bureau*. These two laces were long rivals, and the struggle among the workers at



## THE LACE BOOK

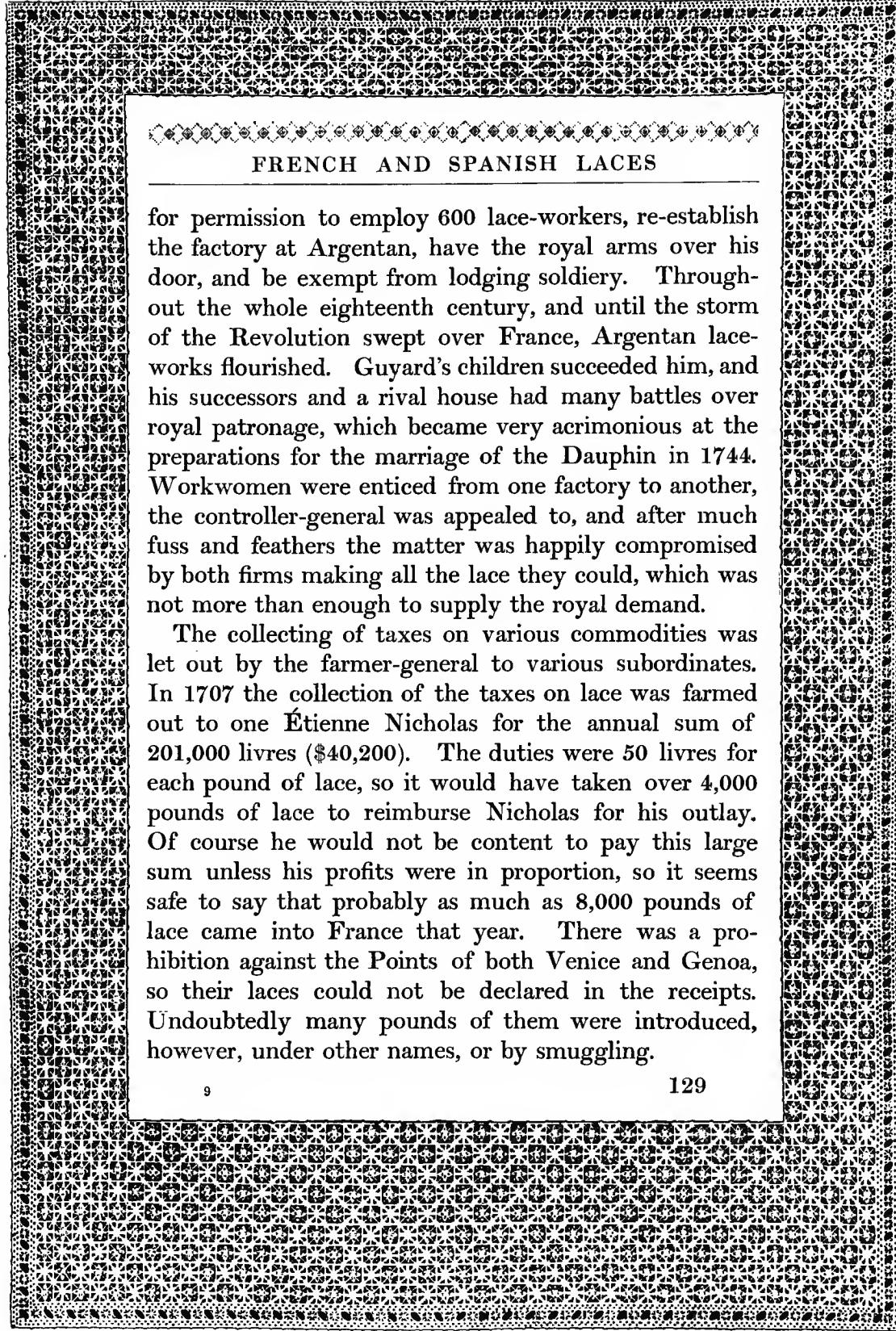
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Argentan, who preferred old methods also, seems to have been similar to that at Alençon. The directress, Mme Raffy, writes to Colbert thanking him for the notice, publicly announced at Argentan to the sound of the trumpet, that the lace-makers of that town are to work for the *Bureau de la Manufacture Royale*, only.

*Point d'Argentan* has long been considered to be especially distinguished by its hexagonal brides, but there are also Venetian laces which have this same peculiarity. These brides, or really background, are a large six-sided mesh worked over with buttonhole stitch, each side of the hexagon being covered with eight or nine buttonhole stitches, although only about one tenth of an inch long. This gives some idea of the minute ground, which is also very strong.

The towns of Alençon and Argentan were but ten miles apart. Communication was constant. Some authorities, like Mr. Dupont, declare that Argentan was but a branch of Alençon, and that both styles of lace were made in both places. It is quite certain that the two grounds were often combined in one lace, and both laces were made with the same material.

The manufacture of lace at Argentan had become practically extinct by 1701, so fickle is fashion, but Mathieu Guyard, a merchant of Paris, sought to revive it. He claimed that his ancestors and himself, for 120 years, had made laces both black and white in the environs of Paris. That his efforts to revive the industry were successful is very evident, since in 1708 he applied

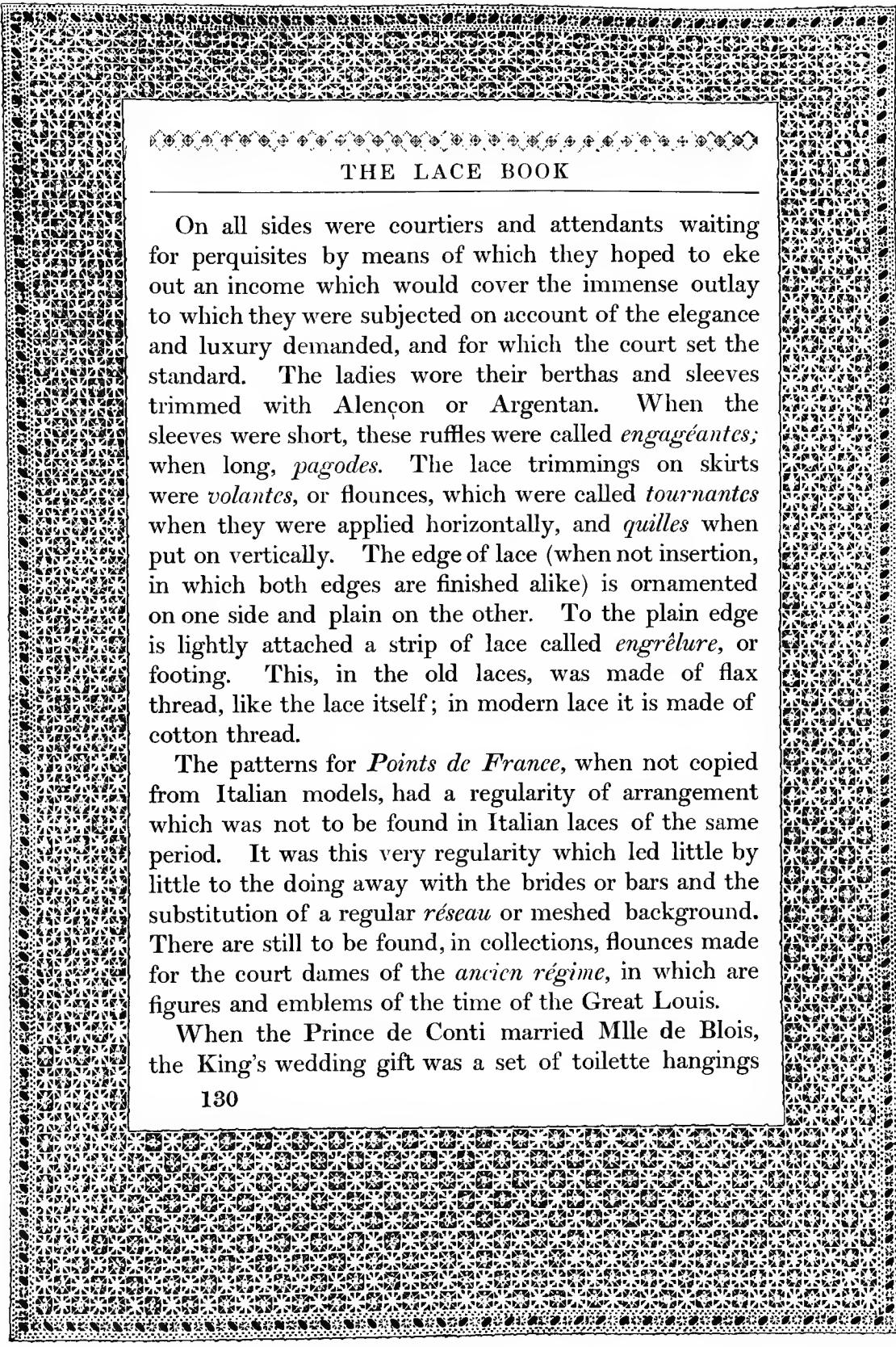


## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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for permission to employ 600 lace-workers, re-establish the factory at Argentan, have the royal arms over his door, and be exempt from lodging soldiery. Throughout the whole eighteenth century, and until the storm of the Revolution swept over France, Argentan lace-works flourished. Guyard's children succeeded him, and his successors and a rival house had many battles over royal patronage, which became very acrimonious at the preparations for the marriage of the Dauphin in 1744. Workwomen were enticed from one factory to another, the controller-general was appealed to, and after much fuss and feathers the matter was happily compromised by both firms making all the lace they could, which was not more than enough to supply the royal demand.

The collecting of taxes on various commodities was let out by the farmer-general to various subordinates. In 1707 the collection of the taxes on lace was farmed out to one Étienne Nicholas for the annual sum of 201,000 livres (\$40,200). The duties were 50 livres for each pound of lace, so it would have taken over 4,000 pounds of lace to reimburse Nicholas for his outlay. Of course he would not be content to pay this large sum unless his profits were in proportion, so it seems safe to say that probably as much as 8,000 pounds of lace came into France that year. There was a prohibition against the Points of both Venice and Genoa, so their laces could not be declared in the receipts. Undoubtedly many pounds of them were introduced, however, under other names, or by smuggling.



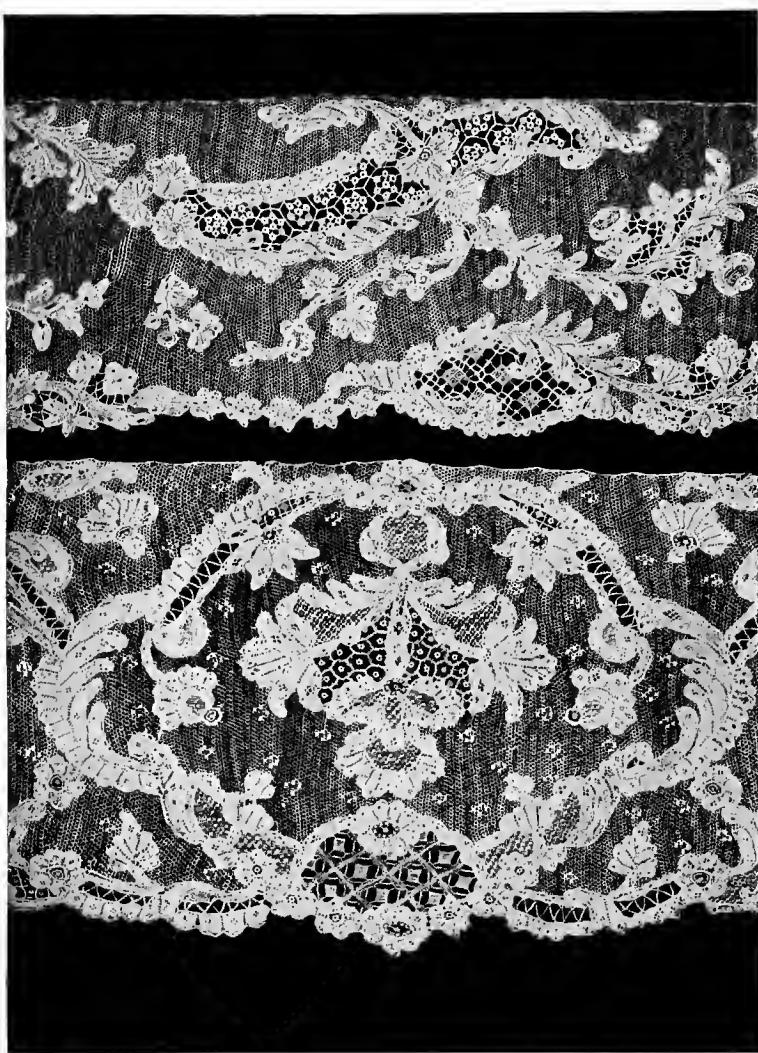
## THE LACE BOOK

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On all sides were courtiers and attendants waiting for perquisites by means of which they hoped to eke out an income which would cover the immense outlay to which they were subjected on account of the elegance and luxury demanded, and for which the court set the standard. The ladies wore their berthas and sleeves trimmed with Alençon or Argentan. When the sleeves were short, these ruffles were called *engagéantes*; when long, *pagodes*. The lace trimmings on skirts were *volantes*, or flounces, which were called *tournantes* when they were applied horizontally, and *quilles* when put on vertically. The edge of lace (when not insertion, in which both edges are finished alike) is ornamented on one side and plain on the other. To the plain edge is lightly attached a strip of lace called *engrélure*, or footing. This, in the old laces, was made of flax thread, like the lace itself; in modern lace it is made of cotton thread.

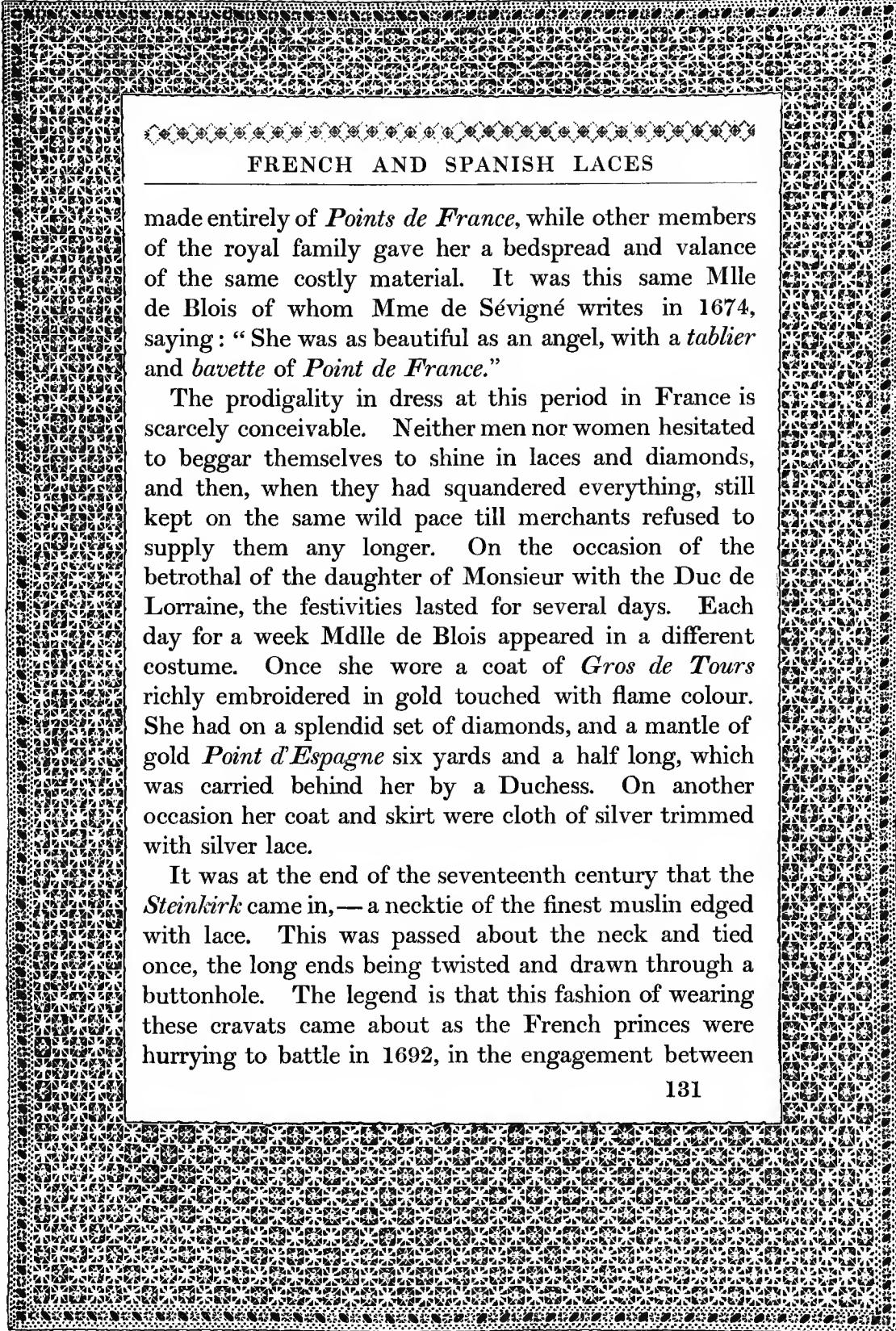
The patterns for *Points de France*, when not copied from Italian models, had a regularity of arrangement which was not to be found in Italian laces of the same period. It was this very regularity which led little by little to the doing away with the brides or bars and the substitution of a regular *réseau* or meshed background. There are still to be found, in collections, flounces made for the court dames of the *ancien régime*, in which are figures and emblems of the time of the Great Louis.

When the Prince de Conti married Mlle de Blois, the King's wedding gift was a set of toilette hangings



**P**LATE XLII.—*Point d'Alençon. Seventeenth  
Century. Style of Louis XIV. Needle point.*





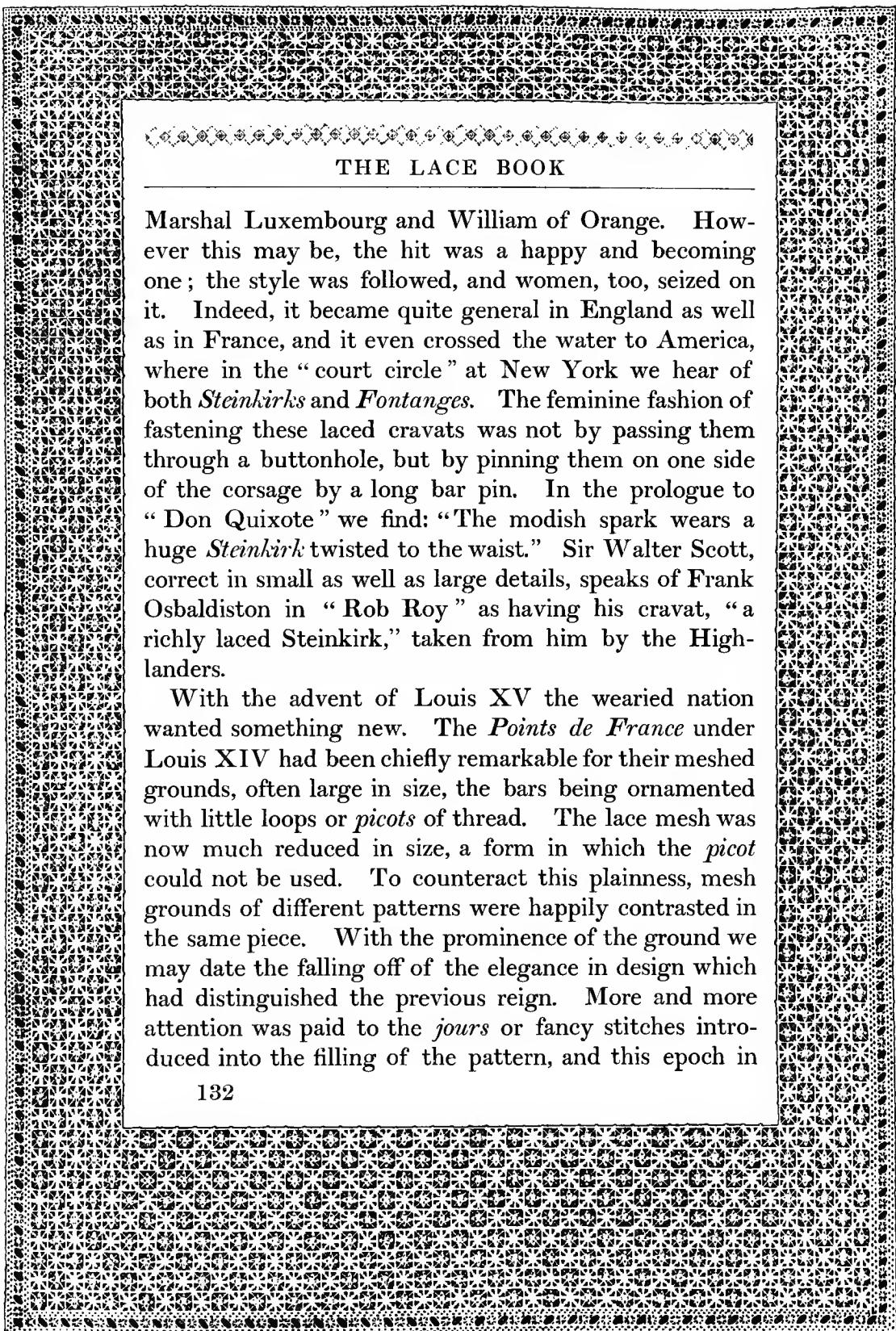
## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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made entirely of *Points de France*, while other members of the royal family gave her a bedspread and valance of the same costly material. It was this same Mlle de Blois of whom Mme de Sévigné writes in 1674, saying: "She was as beautiful as an angel, with a *tablier* and *bavette* of *Point de France*."

The prodigality in dress at this period in France is scarcely conceivable. Neither men nor women hesitated to beggar themselves to shine in laces and diamonds, and then, when they had squandered everything, still kept on the same wild pace till merchants refused to supply them any longer. On the occasion of the betrothal of the daughter of Monsieur with the Duc de Lorraine, the festivities lasted for several days. Each day for a week Mdlle de Blois appeared in a different costume. Once she wore a coat of *Gros de Tours* richly embroidered in gold touched with flame colour. She had on a splendid set of diamonds, and a mantle of gold *Point d'Espagne* six yards and a half long, which was carried behind her by a Duchess. On another occasion her coat and skirt were cloth of silver trimmed with silver lace.

It was at the end of the seventeenth century that the *Steinkirk* came in,— a necktie of the finest muslin edged with lace. This was passed about the neck and tied once, the long ends being twisted and drawn through a buttonhole. The legend is that this fashion of wearing these cravats came about as the French princes were hurrying to battle in 1692, in the engagement between



## THE LACE BOOK

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Marshal Luxembourg and William of Orange. However this may be, the hit was a happy and becoming one; the style was followed, and women, too, seized on it. Indeed, it became quite general in England as well as in France, and it even crossed the water to America, where in the "court circle" at New York we hear of both *Steinkirks* and *Fontanges*. The feminine fashion of fastening these laced cravats was not by passing them through a buttonhole, but by pinning them on one side of the corsage by a long bar pin. In the prologue to "Don Quixote" we find: "The modish spark wears a huge *Steinkirk* twisted to the waist." Sir Walter Scott, correct in small as well as large details, speaks of Frank Osbaldiston in "Rob Roy" as having his cravat, "a richly laced *Steinkirk*," taken from him by the Highlanders.

With the advent of Louis XV the wearied nation wanted something new. The *Points de France* under Louis XIV had been chiefly remarkable for their meshed grounds, often large in size, the bars being ornamented with little loops or *picots* of thread. The lace mesh was now much reduced in size, a form in which the *picot* could not be used. To counteract this plainness, mesh grounds of different patterns were happily contrasted in the same piece. With the prominence of the ground we may date the falling off of the elegance in design which had distinguished the previous reign. More and more attention was paid to the *jours* or fancy stitches introduced into the filling of the pattern, and this epoch in

## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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lace-making produced a variety of exquisite stitches which had never before been attempted. Such fillings were inserted like little jewels in the centre of flowers ; they extended into medallions, along the edges ; they spread into fans and shells infinite in variety, wonderful in beauty. So exquisite were some of these fillings that in small and costly bits of lace they filled the whole background, making a product infinitely richer than when the ground was a simple mesh.

The use of finery which seemed excessive under Louis XIV went even farther under Louis XV. Everything possible was trimmed with lace. The perquisites collected by those connected with the court often rose to immense sums. The ladies of the court attached to the Queen's chamber were nominally paid 150 livres a year, but they were able to sell for their own use the candles which had been once lighted. This item would not seem to be a large one, yet it brought in an income of 5,000 livres. The profit on wax candles was so great that it was shared among many. Those candles which were unconsumed when the play was ended went to the *garde-meuble*, while those that remained after lighting the King's meals were apportioned among others. Every three years the linens and laces of the Queen were renewed in order that the lady of honour and the royal nurse might sell the supply on hand. When the Dauphine died, Mme Brancas at once asserted her rights to all that pertained to her toilette, and this brought no less than 50,000 crowns. The profits of her



## THE LACE BOOK

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wardrobe brought 82,000 livres. In 1738 the Duc de Luynes writes :

“ To-day Madame de Luynes brought the furnishings which she had chosen for the Queen, and which were shown to the ladies of honor. They were bedspreads for the great and small beds, and pillow-cases trimmed with *Point d'Angleterre* of the same pattern. These furnishings cost 30,000 livres, for Madame Luynes did not renew the handsomest bedspreads for the Queen.”

The old “furnishings” were the perquisite of Madame de Luynes, and she seems to have shown unusual consideration for the royal coffers in not renewing the *beaux couvrepieds*.

Even *Point d'Argentan* was not too costly for the trimming of sheets, the lace alone for such a purpose amounting to 40,000 crowns. Aprons were often made of this charming lace, and even children had such with caps and sleeve ruffles to match.

During this period still another use was found for lace, to fall from the edges of the masks used by ladies when riding or driving. In fact some of these dainty articles were entirely of the finest black Chantilly, though the ordinary mask was of black velvet with merely a fall of lace, since these answered better both as a protection to the complexion and as a disguise. Louis XV no longer took such an interest as Louis XIV, stimulated by Colbert, had evinced in the industries of France. The pre-eminence of Alençon was disputed, and *Point d'Angleterre* and Malines became equally esteemed. The favourites of the period set the fashions in laces as in most other details of dress, and the Wardrobe Accounts



**PLATE XLIII.**—“Unknown Princesses.” They  
wear aprons, fronts, sleeve ruffles, and caps of  
Point d’Argentan. Attributed to Belle (1674-1734).



## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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of Madame Du Barry are fairly preposterous with the sums spent for Brussels and *Point d'Angleterre*. In these accounts is also mentioned India muslin so fine that a length sufficient to make four dresses weighed but 15 ounces.

While the French laces with which we are most familiar, and which were the most costly and beautiful, were made with the needle, France also had her bobbin laces. Colbert directed that "all sorts of threadwork, both with the needle and with bobbin on the pillow" should be made in the lace-works he established, but the bobbin laces had a later start. The towns where bobbin laces were made under Colbert's administration were Arras, Le Quesnoy, Loudon, and Aurillac. They were soon overshadowed, however, by their better known neighbour, Valenciennes, the place where the most esteemed of bobbin laces were made.

Valenciennes lace attracted but little attention when it was first made. It was not till the eighteenth century that it became esteemed and accepted as one of the laces demanded by fashion. Indeed, none of the pillow-made laces, Mechlin, Valenciennes, or Chantilly, enjoyed the reputation at first which caused the needle points of Venice and Alençon to occupy so prominent a position. Still, the love for lace had been implanted, and the noble work done by Colbert in establishing works all over the Kingdom bore fruit later. While needle-point laces may be said to have reached their supreme heights in the seventeenth century, bobbin-made lace came to

## THE LACE BOOK

its fullest expression in the eighteenth century and has never since been excelled.

Under Louis XV fashion demanded soft and filmy laces, which were bobbin-made, the very materials and mode of manufacture making needle point stiffer. The earliest French bobbin laces, like those of other countries at this period (the sixteenth century), were of gold and silver threads, — *Passements* or *Guipures* as they were called. Le Puy and Mirecourt were the best-known places of their manufacture, and these laces are made there yet. The patterns have changed little, being geometric, with formal floral forms and star-like centres.

The making of these laces at the present time is one of the chief industries of Auvergne, where nearly 200,000 women, living simple lives in the mountains, add to their meagre incomes by lace-making. They are able quickly to follow the dictates of fashion, since they can vary the materials with which they work: silk, worsted, and goat's or even rabbit's hair being employed with equal facility. The most popular lace of the last century upon which they have been employed is a black silk Guipure. Cluny lace, a new name for the old-fashioned *passement*, was also a favourite for a period, the name being derived from the famous Cluny Museum in Paris, where examples of ancient laces are preserved.

The old gold and silver laces are still made, but of course in greatly diminished quantities, since this form of the fabric is no longer used on men's dresses.

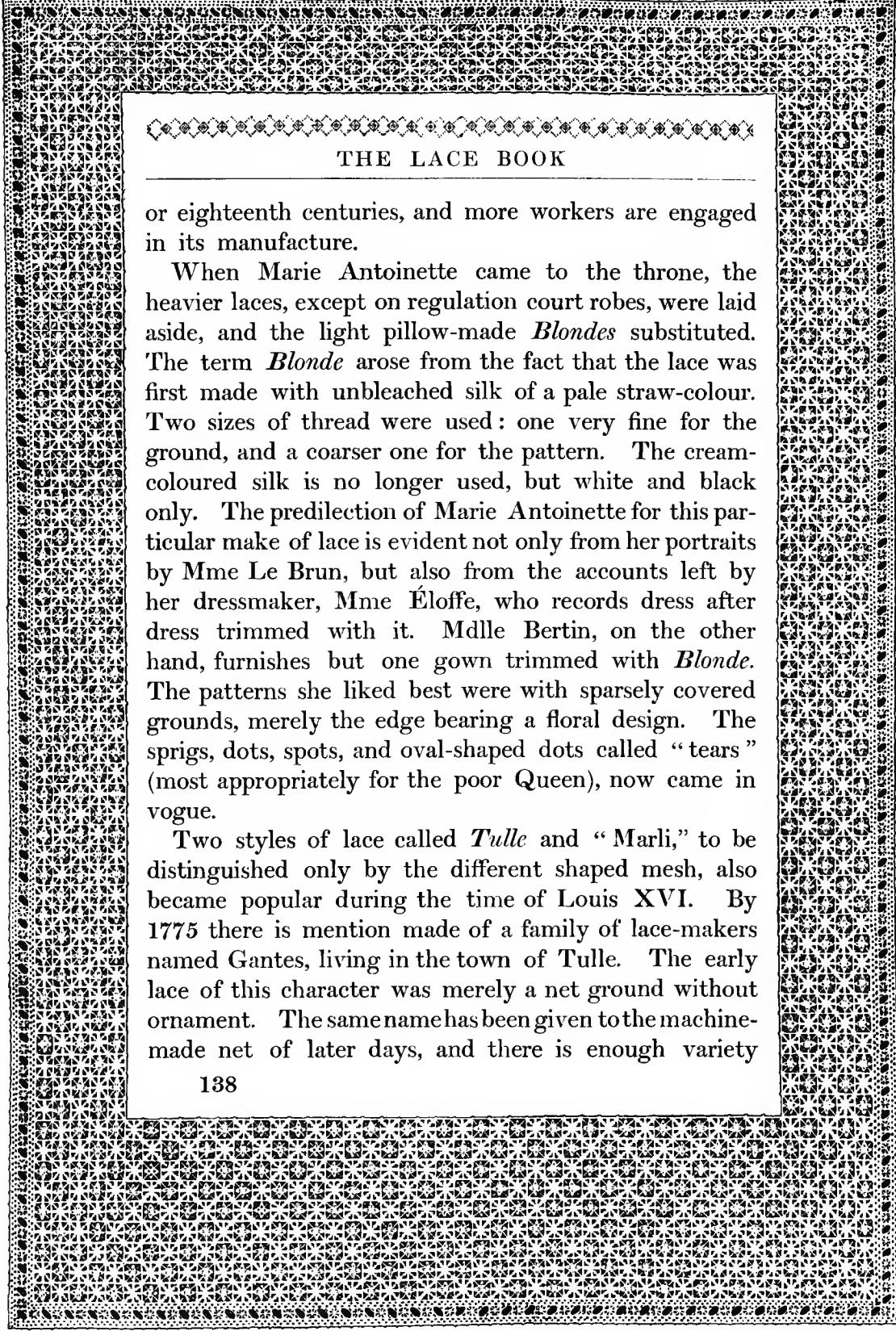
## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

The fancy for laces with fine grounds, which was so marked in the eighteenth century, was a great misfortune to the Guipure-making centres.

*Point de Milan*, another pillow-made lace, suffered also, since it was a lace of scrolls and large effects, the gimp being rather heavy.

The dress of the *élégantes* of the period of Louis XV abounded in every description of sumptuous negligées. Many of these gowns were of the finest lawn and muslin, very richly bedecked with lace, which had to combine the qualities of a filmy lightness and a capability of "doing up" well. Valenciennes lace seemed most happily to combine these qualities. By this time it had passed through the various stages of different ground-works, and the clear square or diamond-shaped mesh had been adopted, its regularity displaying the floral ornament of the pattern to the best advantage.

For elegant dress, when silk lace was demanded, Chantilly, after a period devoted to experiment and struggle, suddenly sprang to the fore. The material employed for the black laces is a silk thread called *Grenadine d'Alais*, and the patterns of the old Chantilly, whether of black or white silk, are distinguished by the introduction of vases and baskets to hold the flowers which form the design. Black laces, however, never had the vogue of white, and were chiefly used by elderly ladies, for shawls, scarfs, and any outdoor garments, or for mounting over a brilliant colour. It is much more in demand now than in either the seventeenth



## THE LACE BOOK

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or eighteenth centuries, and more workers are engaged in its manufacture.

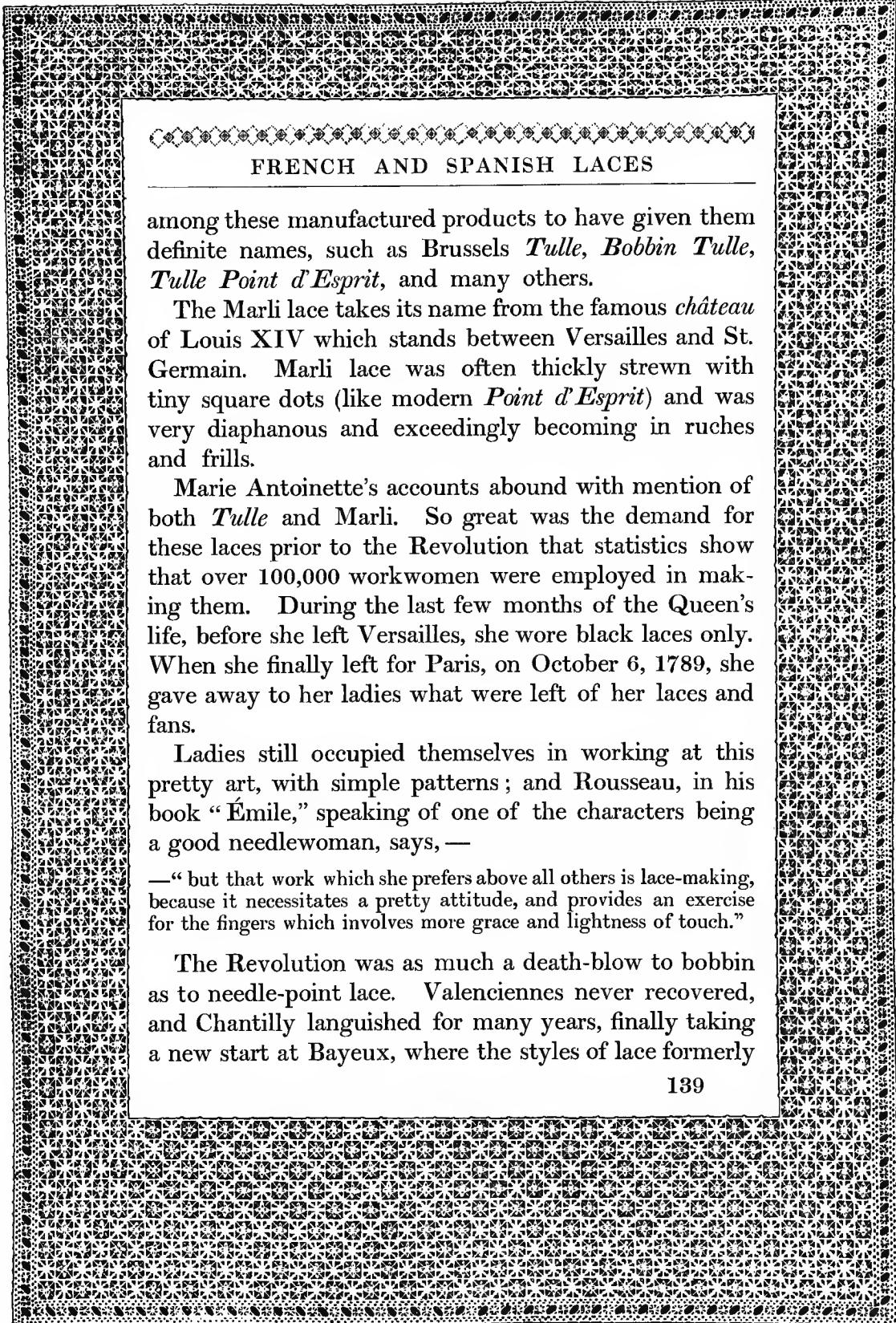
When Marie Antoinette came to the throne, the heavier laces, except on regulation court robes, were laid aside, and the light pillow-made *Blondes* substituted. The term *Blonde* arose from the fact that the lace was first made with unbleached silk of a pale straw-colour. Two sizes of thread were used: one very fine for the ground, and a coarser one for the pattern. The cream-coloured silk is no longer used, but white and black only. The predilection of Marie Antoinette for this particular make of lace is evident not only from her portraits by Mme Le Brun, but also from the accounts left by her dressmaker, Mme Éloffe, who records dress after dress trimmed with it. Mdlle Bertin, on the other hand, furnishes but one gown trimmed with *Blonde*. The patterns she liked best were with sparsely covered grounds, merely the edge bearing a floral design. The sprigs, dots, spots, and oval-shaped dots called "tears" (most appropriately for the poor Queen), now came in vogue.

Two styles of lace called *Tulle* and "Marli," to be distinguished only by the different shaped mesh, also became popular during the time of Louis XVI. By 1775 there is mention made of a family of lace-makers named Gantes, living in the town of Tulle. The early lace of this character was merely a net ground without ornament. The same name has been given to the machine-made net of later days, and there is enough variety



**P**LATE XLIV.—*Charles de France (1757-1836) and Marie Adélaïde de France. The lace apron, sleeve ruffles, cap and cravat and ruffs are Argentan. Portrait by Drouais.*





## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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among these manufactured products to have given them definite names, such as Brussels *Tulle*, *Bobbin Tulle*, *Tulle Point d'Esprit*, and many others.

The Marli lace takes its name from the famous *château* of Louis XIV which stands between Versailles and St. Germain. Marli lace was often thickly strewn with tiny square dots (like modern *Point d'Esprit*) and was very diaphanous and exceedingly becoming in ruches and frills.

Marie Antoinette's accounts abound with mention of both *Tulle* and Marli. So great was the demand for these laces prior to the Revolution that statistics show that over 100,000 workwomen were employed in making them. During the last few months of the Queen's life, before she left Versailles, she wore black laces only. When she finally left for Paris, on October 6, 1789, she gave away to her ladies what were left of her laces and fans.

Ladies still occupied themselves in working at this pretty art, with simple patterns; and Rousseau, in his book "*Émile*," speaking of one of the characters being a good needlewoman, says,—

—“but that work which she prefers above all others is lace-making, because it necessitates a pretty attitude, and provides an exercise for the fingers which involves more grace and lightness of touch.”

The Revolution was as much a death-blow to bobbin as to needle-point lace. Valenciennes never recovered, and Chantilly languished for many years, finally taking a new start at Bayeux, where the styles of lace formerly

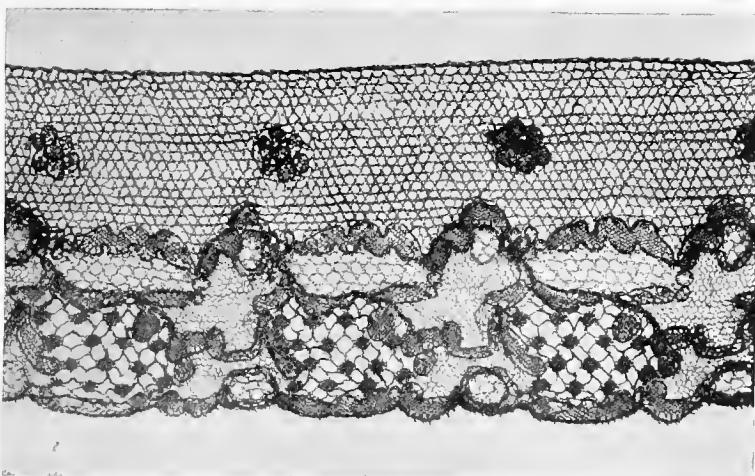
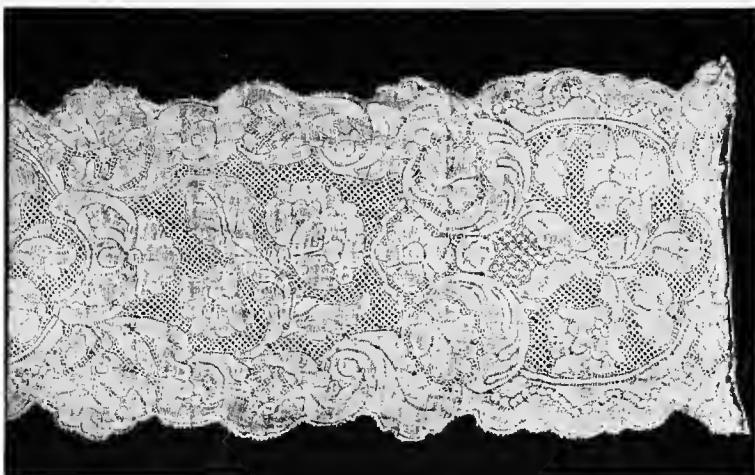
## THE LACE BOOK

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made at Chantilly were revived with great success. Mrs. Palliser says that lace was never more in vogue than in the early days of the first Empire, and the orders given by Napoleon and the members of his family and court were the richest ever received by the French lace-workers. His sister Pauline, Princess Borghese, says herself that she is "passionately fond of lace," and her portraits show that it was always used in some fashion or other on her gowns. The bed-coverings ordered for Marie Louise by Napoleon were made of Alençon, and, besides the bedspread, consisted of tester, valance, pillow-cases, and curtains.

The Empress Eugénie was also fond of lace, and much Alençon was bought for her. She had one flounce of Alençon of such exquisite quality that its manufacture occupied thirty-six women for a year and a half. Marie Antoinette and the Empress Eugénie were, however, equally fond of *Blonde* lace, and in the celebrated portrait by Winterhalter the Empress wears a gown trimmed with it. This piece of *Blonde*,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  yards in length and 20 inches wide, was sold in London in April, 1902, for 48 guineas (\$252),—not a large price considering its history.

Even before her marriage, while Mlle Montijo, she delighted in visiting the lace shops and hunting out choice pieces. In 1865 she organised a competition among the lace-workers of Chantilly and Alençon for two dresses, one of each style, and when they were completed, dressed in the Alençon gown, she distributed



**P**LATE XLV.—*A.* “*Vrai Valenciennes*,” showing a bit of *fond de neige*, or snowy background. Bobbin lace. Early Eighteenth Century. *B.* Old black *chantilly*, with double ground. Bobbin lace. Early Eighteenth Century.



## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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the prizes. The price given for the gown she chose was £3,000 (\$15,000).

The *layette* of the Prince Imperial was quite as rich as that of his predecessors, the King of Rome, or the "Grande Bébé," as Louis XIV was called. The christening-robe, with its cap and mantle, was composed of Alençon, while the same lace was used for the coverlet of the cradle, the curtains of which were of finest old Mechlin. His frocks, of which there were twelve dozen, were either trimmed or largely composed of this same costly lace, and the caps and aprons of his nurses were also trimmed with it.

There was another bobbin lace often mentioned in the contemporary literature of the day during the sixteenth and succeeding centuries, called *Mignonette*, which was a light, inexpensive trimming and popular among the lower and middle classes. The farmer's wife generally managed to have enough *Mignonette* to trim her best caps, its lightness rendering it admirable for this use. The lace was made from thread bleached and spun at Antwerp, and was never more than two or three inches wide. It was largely exported, and was made not only in Paris, but in Lorraine, Auvergne, Normandy, and Switzerland. This is one of the laces of which an old writer speaks as being exported in large quantities to the "islands of America."

Paris herself was long a lace-making centre, records existing as far back as early in the seventeenth century. The more common laces like *Mignonette*, *Bisette*, and

## THE LACE BOOK

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*Point de Paris* were those earliest made by the Huguenots who settled there. As finer laces were required these Paris laces improved and became fine and delicate in quality. Gold lace was made in Paris long before the time of Colbert, and was known as *Point d'Espagne*. It was often enriched with pearls and jewels and was renowned all over Europe for its fine workmanship and beauty. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes broke up its manufacture. These makers of gold and silver lace in the time of Louis XIV had their own particular quarter in the Rue Sainte-Honoré and Rue des Bourdonnais, while the thread-lace shops were confined to the Rue Bétizy.

In 1704 a report made to the Chamber of Commerce of Paris estimated that one-fourth of the population, varying in age from six to seventy years and of many conditions of life, supported themselves either wholly or in part by the making of lace. The number fell off greatly, so that in 1850 there were but 250,000 workers. In 1903 there were barely 120,000, and these cannot make a living, as the work is poorly paid, the most skilful earning about two francs for twelve hours' work, while the ordinary workers receive but from 60 to 80 centimes.

But Paris, as several times before, has awakened to the folly of letting such a valuable industry die. On June 16, 1903, the Chamber of Deputies passed two short clauses which were appended to the Code of Education, enacting that in the lace-making departments

## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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and centres of France special instruction "should be given in lace making and designing, with the object of developing and perfecting the artistic education of the workers."

"Hitherto a child has been compelled to attend the primary schools until the age of thirteen. Now, such laces as the Alencon and the exquisite and rare Rose Point require an apprenticeship of at least five years. Therefore it follows that a girl will be an expense and a burden upon her parents for nineteen years, and at the end of that time, according to present rates of payment, she will be capable of earning only from 60 to 80 centimes at first, reaching 2 francs a day when she has attained great proficiency. Naturally, parents prefer farm labour or domestic service for their daughters, and hence there is a constant drainage from the country districts to the large towns."

If the new clauses be intelligently administered, the new schools of lace design and lace-making will have the very desirable effect of stemming the tide which is rapidly depopulating the country districts, by providing the girls with a means of livelihood at a still early age.

The principal centres of lace-making to-day are Paris, with her revived interest in the art, and the Le Puy district, which, earliest in the field, still holds her own as to quality and quantity of lace made there. The 100,000 lace-makers are scattered along the Haute Loire, and in the Puy de Dome, where the women meet at the house of one whom they call the "béate." This woman, for a small sum, provides a fire and light, and, to help pass the long day, either reads or tells stories. It is in Normandy that the lace-workers, as their ancestors did centuries ago, take their pillows to

## THE LACE BOOK

the lofts over the cow-houses, gaining a slight warmth from the beasts beneath them, which obviates the smoke and expense of a fire. These Normandy peasant workers still use the patterns handed down by previous generations, their strong artistic sense enabling them to improve them and give them great grace and delicacy.

Machine-made lace is not so great a rival as one might fear. Real lace always has been and always will be an article of luxury within the reach only of the few, and these will always buy it. In many old French families there are pieces of lace which have been heirlooms for generations, and which have a value to persons of taste and culture beyond even that of the family jewels. We have quoted from the expense account of the Duc de Penthiévre for the year 1738, when his ruffles and sets of lace embraced ells of the most costly makes. That these precious fabrics have been carefully preserved is most certain, since the present Duc de Penthiévre, in April, 1903, presented to his ward, on her marriage with the Marquis Gouy d'Arsy, some priceless old laces. The Comtesse de Chateaubriand is another holder of quantities of antique lace treasures, and interest in reviving this industry is felt not only in France, but in Italy and England as well.

### *Reference List of French Lace*

**POINTS DE FRANCE.** This was the name given during the reign of Louis XIV to those rich laces made in France which were almost exact copies of the Veniccc



**PLATE XLVI.** — Queen Marie Antoinette  
(1755-1793). The lace on skirt, corsage, and  
sleeves is Blonde. Portrait by Mme Lebrun.

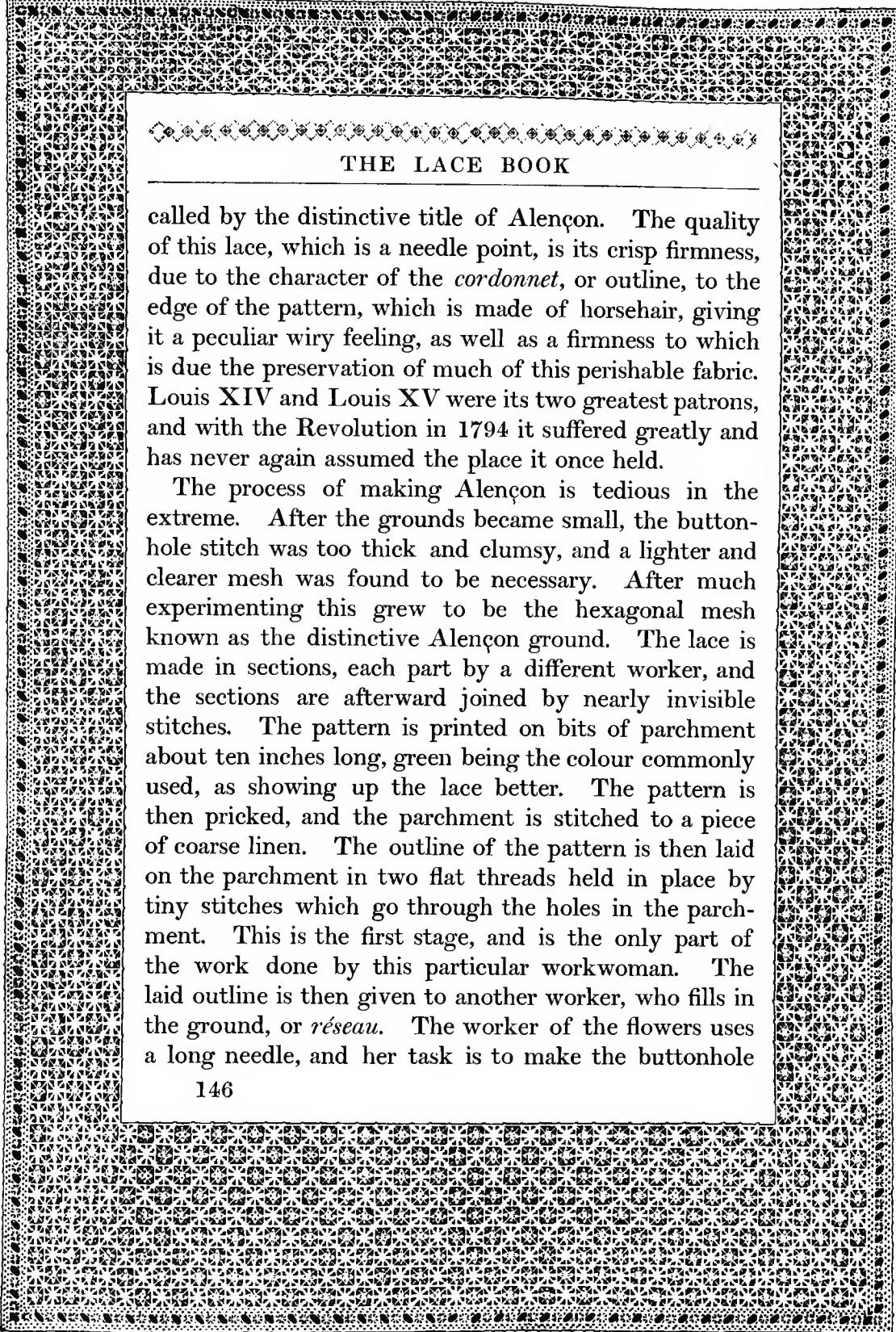


## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

and Milan laces of the same period. These home-made laces were intended to take the places of Italian and Flemish laces, and they did. Their cost, however, was extreme, so that their wear was confined to the wealthy. The mode of making these laces was similar to that employed in the *Gros Point de Venise*, and it was under the superintendence of Mme Gilbert that the French and Italian workers evolved the beautiful fabric which became known a little later as *Point d'Alençon*. During the time of Louis XIV the groundwork of *Points de France* had been rather regular meshes, which were ornamented by loops or *picots*. Little by little these meshes were reduced in size, and grew to the ground called *petit réseau*, or small mesh. The handsomest of the *Points de France* at the commencement of the eighteenth century was known as—

**POINT DE SEDAN.** The city of Sedan was selected by Colbert as one of his lace centres, and this large-meshed lace, with bold springing patterns, was successfully made there. The lace has a varied thickness imparted to it by different stitches which give high relief in some parts of the pattern. Much of this lace was used on the splendid rochets of the bishops of that time. It closely resembles *Gros Point de Venise*. The use of lace during the reign of Louis XIV was prodigious. Even such visitors as came to the court were presented with cravats, collars, and cuffs by the magnificent Louis.

**POINT D'ALENÇON.** The final evolution of this lace was completed by about 1678, and from this time was



## THE LACE BOOK

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called by the distinctive title of Alençon. The quality of this lace, which is a needle point, is its crisp firmness, due to the character of the *cordonnet*, or outline, to the edge of the pattern, which is made of horsehair, giving it a peculiar wiry feeling, as well as a firmness to which is due the preservation of much of this perishable fabric. Louis XIV and Louis XV were its two greatest patrons, and with the Revolution in 1794 it suffered greatly and has never again assumed the place it once held.

The process of making Alençon is tedious in the extreme. After the grounds became small, the button-hole stitch was too thick and clumsy, and a lighter and clearer mesh was found to be necessary. After much experimenting this grew to be the hexagonal mesh known as the distinctive Alençon ground. The lace is made in sections, each part by a different worker, and the sections are afterward joined by nearly invisible stitches. The pattern is printed on bits of parchment about ten inches long, green being the colour commonly used, as showing up the lace better. The pattern is then pricked, and the parchment is stitched to a piece of coarse linen. The outline of the pattern is then laid on the parchment in two flat threads held in place by tiny stitches which go through the holes in the parchment. This is the first stage, and is the only part of the work done by this particular workwoman. The laid outline is then given to another worker, who fills in the ground, or *r  eau*. The worker of the flowers uses a long needle, and her task is to make the buttonhole

## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

stitch, worked from left to right, giving an evenness which is one of the greatest beauties of this lace. Then come the special workers of the various fillings or *jours*, which give so much variety, and then, this section being complete, a sharp knife is used to separate the lace from the parchment, and the final and trying work of uniting all the bits into one perfect piece is all that remains.

When the groundwork was a "bride" ground, of a large six-sided mesh, the labour was even greater, as each of the six sides was worked over with seven or eight buttonhole stitches. This firm ground and the horsehair introduced into the border made this lace particularly desirable for those towering head-dresses worn by French women for so many years. The chief drawback to this lace was that it washed badly, since the horsehair thickened and spoiled the shape of the lace.

The wedding dress of the Empress Eugénie consisted of four flounces of Alençon which completely covered the white satin skirt, and the same lace was also used on the high-necked corsage and on the sleeves.

The prices paid for these laces in auctions to-day compare favourably with what they brought in the hey-day of their fame. Within the past year, at Christie's, in London, an Alençon panel for a dress front, 44 inches deep and 17 inches wide, brought £43 (\$215). A length of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  yards of flouncing 14 inches deep, showing a charming design of flowers tied up with ribbons, sold for £46 (\$230).

## THE LACE BOOK

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A famous English collector of fine old laces was Sir William R. Drake, and, by the way, it is chiefly men whom the collecting fever strikes most deeply. Not only to such subjects as books and furniture do they confine themselves, but to such feminine subjects as china and lace are they ardently devoted. Mr. Paige bequeathed to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts his splendid collection, which it took him years to gather. Sir William Drake's, unfortunately, came under the hammer, and some of the specimens were sold at Christie's, April 24, 1902. The prices of some of the choicest of these pieces are given to serve as a criterion to owners and buyers, although it was acknowledged that the prices brought on this occasion were unusually high, but the quality and condition of the pieces must be taken into account. The highest price paid was £460 (\$2,300) for a flounce of *Point d'Argentan*, 4 yards long and 25 inches deep. The pattern was a bold and graceful one with scrolls and arabesques appearing among the flowers. A length of *Point de Venise*, 58 inches long, and 24 inches deep, with conventional flower pattern, brought £360 (\$1,800). There was a third piece of lace, 4 yards of the finest old Italian Rose Point, which, although but  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches deep, brought the large sum of £420 (\$2,100), making the cost \$525 a yard. The exquisite workmanship and nearly perfect condition of this piece brought out many competitors.

White lace is always more in demand than black, for at this same sale some fine black Chantilly, 23 inches



**P**LATE XLVII. — *La Duchesse d'Aumale.*  
*Flounces of black chantilly lace. Nineteenth*  
*Century. Portrait by Winterhalter.*



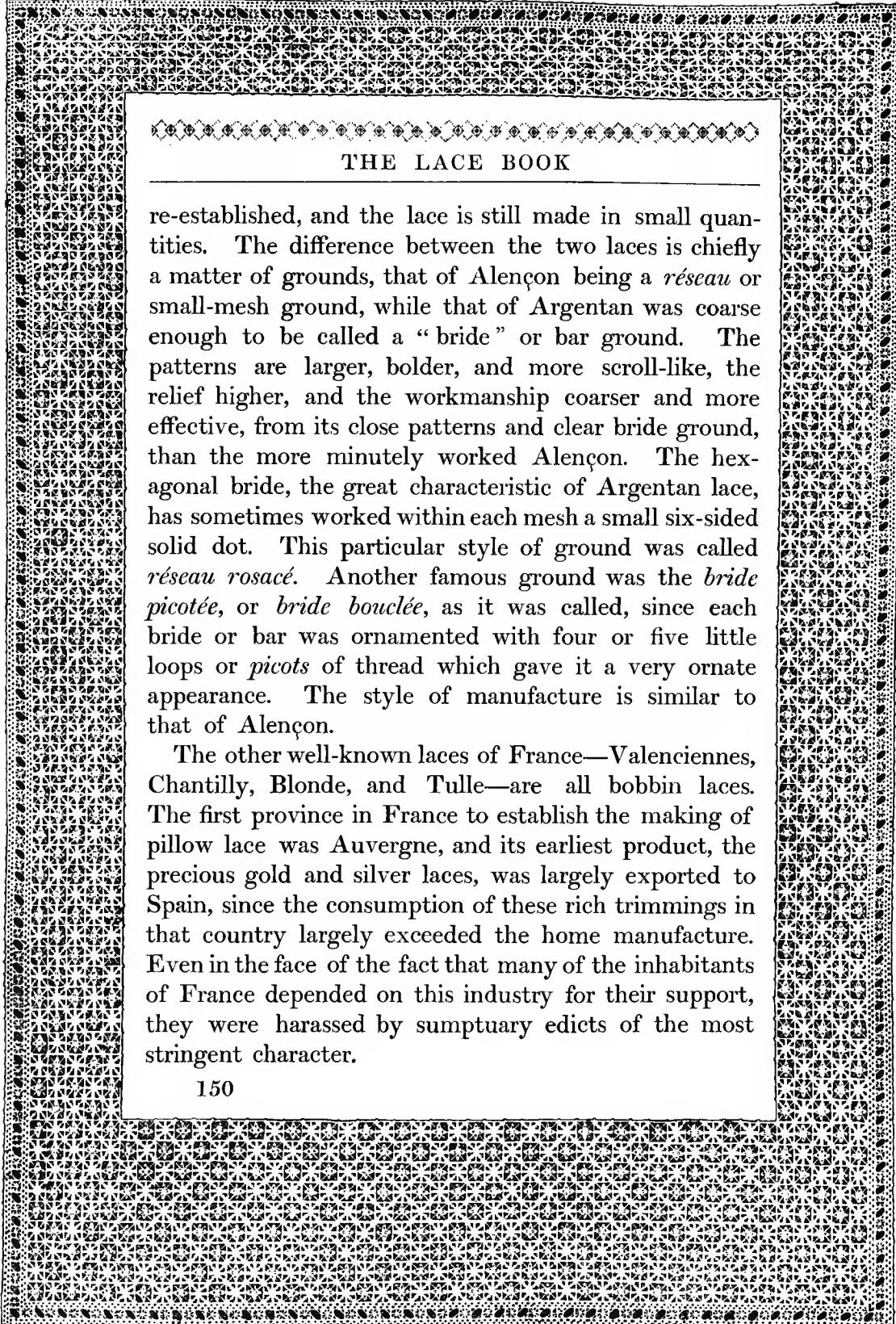
## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

wide, brought but £2 (\$10) a yard, while 3½ yards of 8-inch width fetched but a guinea (\$5.25).

At the present time Alençon lace is made in Alençon, Bayeux, and even in Venice. It is being imported in fair quantities to America, since each year there is a slowly increasing demand for "real lace," as it is called in distinction from that which is machine-made. It does not take the rank it once did: Brussels, Mechlin, and Valenciennes taking precedence over it.

POINT D'ARGENTAN. Like Alençon, Argentan is also a needle-point lace, these two being the only needle-point laces of France with a net ground. The name Alençon is a much more familiar one than Argentan, although the two laces were originated at about the same time; yet the output from Argentan never reached the amount made at Alençon. In 1744, when the manufacture of lace was progressing briskly, there were at Argentan about 1,200 workers, while at Alençon and its neighbourhood the number was close to 8,000. This was the period when, in order to supply the demand, work-people were enticed from one town to the other,—to the great uneasiness of the superintendents who had large orders to fill.

In 1788, according to that indefatigable traveller, Arthur Young, the industry at Argentan was very flourishing, since the value of the lace made there exceeded 500,000 livres (\$100,000). The Revolution killed the manufacture of this lace, which was revived in 1808, but failed in 1810. By 1874 it was once again

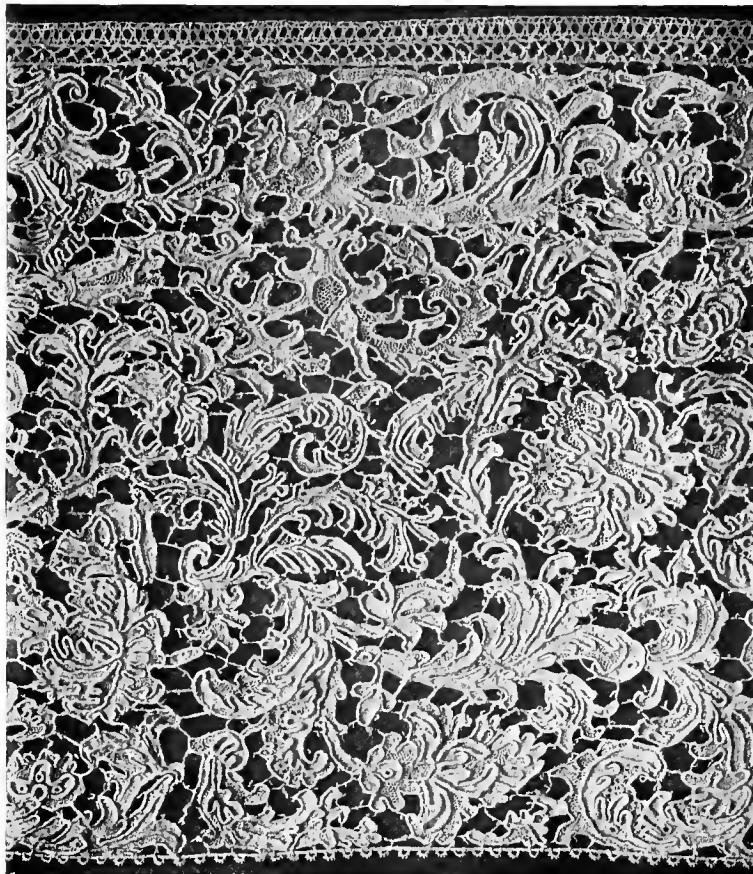


## THE LACE BOOK

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re-established, and the lace is still made in small quantities. The difference between the two laces is chiefly a matter of grounds, that of Alençon being a *réseau* or small-mesh ground, while that of Argentan was coarse enough to be called a "bride" or bar ground. The patterns are larger, bolder, and more scroll-like, the relief higher, and the workmanship coarser and more effective, from its close patterns and clear bride ground, than the more minutely worked Alençon. The hexagonal bride, the great characteristic of Argentan lace, has sometimes worked within each mesh a small six-sided solid dot. This particular style of ground was called *réseau rosacé*. Another famous ground was the *bride picotée*, or *bride bouclée*, as it was called, since each bride or bar was ornamented with four or five little loops or *picots* of thread which gave it a very ornate appearance. The style of manufacture is similar to that of Alençon.

The other well-known laces of France—Valenciennes, Chantilly, Blonde, and Tulle—are all bobbin laces. The first province in France to establish the making of pillow lace was Auvergne, and its earliest product, the precious gold and silver laces, was largely exported to Spain, since the consumption of these rich trimmings in that country largely exceeded the home manufacture. Even in the face of the fact that many of the inhabitants of France depended on this industry for their support, they were harassed by sumptuary edicts of the most stringent character.



**PLATE XLVIII.** *Spanish needle point. Sixteenth Century. Photograph by Charles Balliard.*



## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

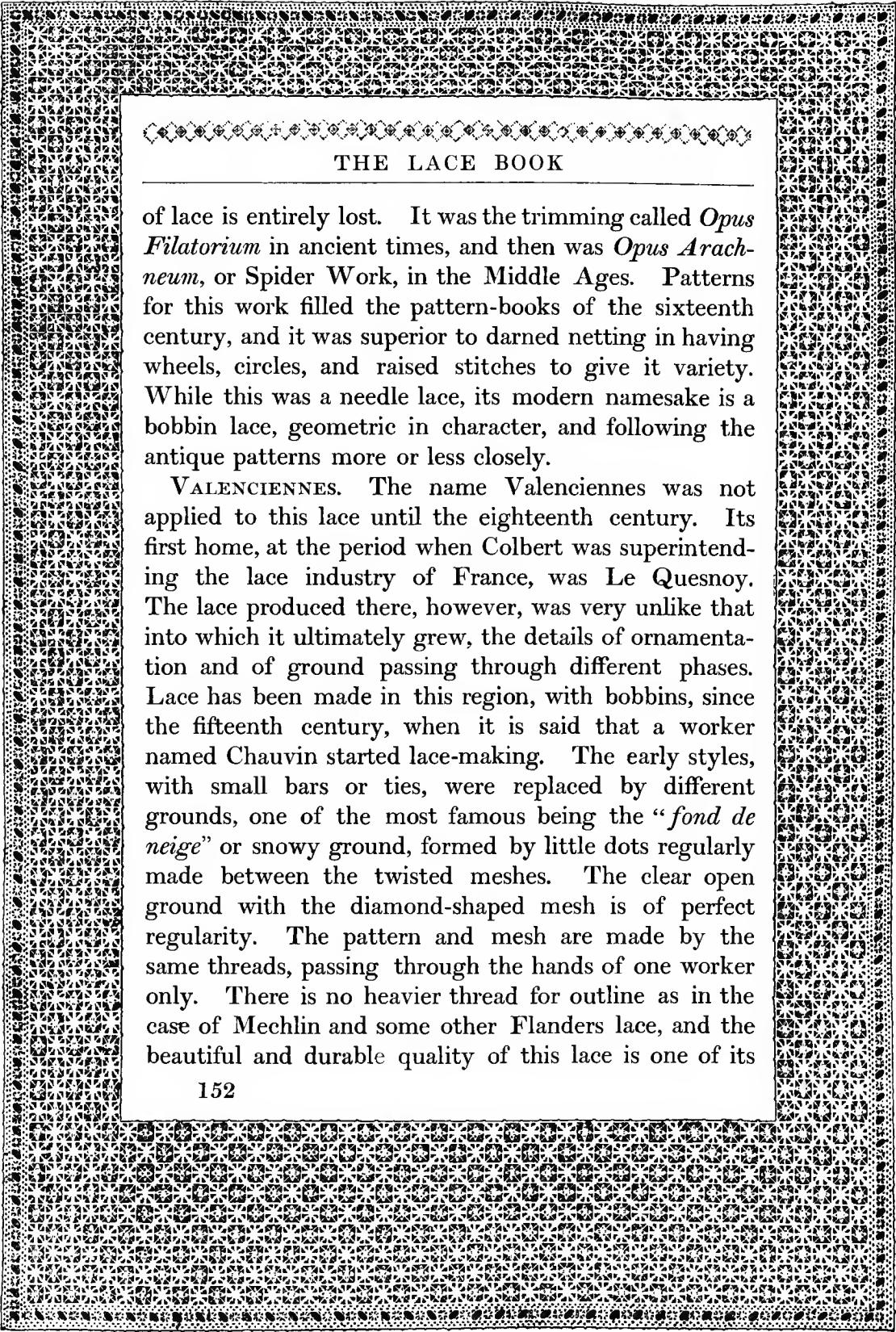
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In 1639 the Parliament of Toulouse issued a decree which the seneschal of Le Puy made known to the inhabitants throughout the town at the sound of the trumpet. This decree prohibited, under penalty of a large fine, "everybody of either sex, quality, or condition from wearing any sort of lace, whether of silk or white thread with glittering *passagement* of gold or silver, real or false."

It can be imagined into what a desperate condition such a foolish move threw the lace-makers of the region. They were rescued by the eloquence of a Jesuit priest, who prevailed on the Parliament in 1640 to revoke the decree, and for his good offices the lace-makers chose him as their patron saint, and St. François Régis is still invoked by the lace-workers of Auvergne.

The Aurillac laces of gold and silver were in demand at court. A mantle of "*Point d'Aurillac* gold and silver" belonged to the Prince de Conti, and it was also used for veils, sleeves, and guards or bands bordering garments.

**CLUNY LACE.** The Guipure made at Le Puy and an old variety of lace has of late years been called Cluny lace. It is a coarse lace with brides or bars, and is very effective, particularly when made in black. The old patterns were fine and graceful, both in scrolls and in floral forms, and there is a certain rich elegance to the black lace which makes it seem strange that it has not become more popular. The earliest history of this style



## THE LACE BOOK

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of lace is entirely lost. It was the trimming called *Opus Filatorium* in ancient times, and then was *Opus Arachneum*, or Spider Work, in the Middle Ages. Patterns for this work filled the pattern-books of the sixteenth century, and it was superior to darned netting in having wheels, circles, and raised stitches to give it variety. While this was a needle lace, its modern namesake is a bobbin lace, geometric in character, and following the antique patterns more or less closely.

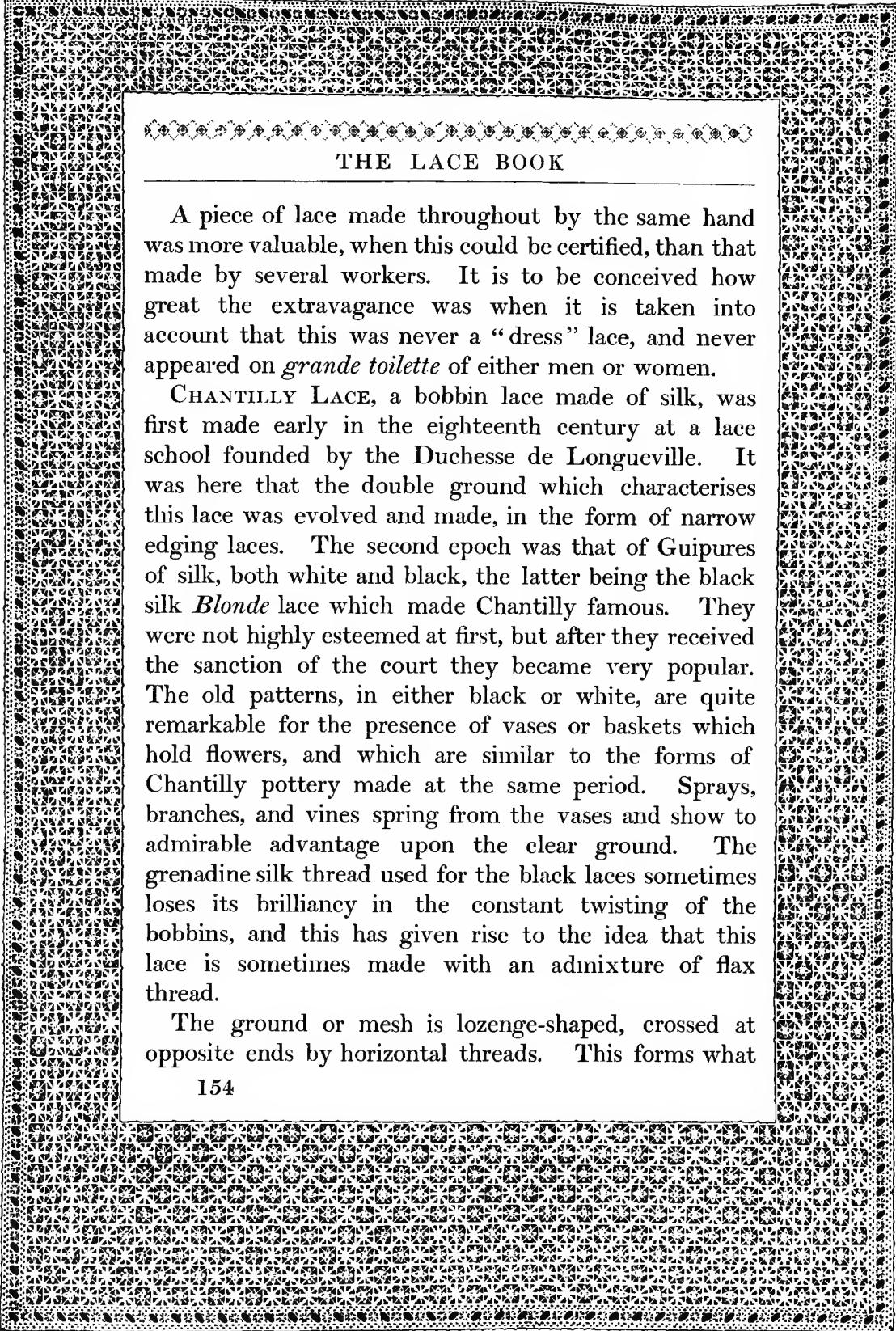
**VALENCIENNES.** The name Valenciennes was not applied to this lace until the eighteenth century. Its first home, at the period when Colbert was superintending the lace industry of France, was Le Quesnoy. The lace produced there, however, was very unlike that into which it ultimately grew, the details of ornamentation and of ground passing through different phases. Lace has been made in this region, with bobbins, since the fifteenth century, when it is said that a worker named Chauvin started lace-making. The early styles, with small bars or ties, were replaced by different grounds, one of the most famous being the "*fond de neige*" or snowy ground, formed by little dots regularly made between the twisted meshes. The clear open ground with the diamond-shaped mesh is of perfect regularity. The pattern and mesh are made by the same threads, passing through the hands of one worker only. There is no heavier thread for outline as in the case of Mechlin and some other Flanders lace, and the beautiful and durable quality of this lace is one of its

## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

great merits. When the desire for choice laces was at its height, the making of this lace in its perfection was carried on in the town of Valenciennes, so this name was bestowed upon it. Only the lace made actually within the town limits was called *vrai Valenciennes*; that made outside, whether in France or Belgium, was called *fausse Valenciennes*. The Revolution was responsible for the disappearance of this industry from the town of Valenciennes, and what was French loss was Flemish gain.

The modern Valenciennes is much less ornate and elaborate than the old. The French lace owed its superiority to the greater number of times the bobbin was twisted in forming the mesh, and it was this frequent twisting which caused the lace to be so costly, since it required so much time to complete even one inch.

Arthur Young, whom we have quoted before, says that in 1788 Valenciennes lace about three inches wide, for gentlemen's ruffles, cost about 216 livres (\$43) an ell (48 inches). Some lace-workers could make but half an ell (24 inches) in a year, and the wages were but 20 to 30 sous a day. Even at such starvation prices there were 3,600 workers in the city alone, carrying on their labour in dark, damp cellars, since under such conditions the thread worked more smoothly. No wonder that the trimming of one of Mme Du Barry's pillow-cases cost 487 francs (\$97), and that a pair of lappets were priced at 1,030 francs (\$206).



## THE LACE BOOK

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A piece of lace made throughout by the same hand was more valuable, when this could be certified, than that made by several workers. It is to be conceived how great the extravagance was when it is taken into account that this was never a "dress" lace, and never appeared on *grande toilette* of either men or women.

CHANTILLY LACE, a bobbin lace made of silk, was first made early in the eighteenth century at a lace school founded by the Duchesse de Longueville. It was here that the double ground which characterises this lace was evolved and made, in the form of narrow edging laces. The second epoch was that of Guipures of silk, both white and black, the latter being the black silk *Blonde* lace which made Chantilly famous. They were not highly esteemed at first, but after they received the sanction of the court they became very popular. The old patterns, in either black or white, are quite remarkable for the presence of vases or baskets which hold flowers, and which are similar to the forms of Chantilly pottery made at the same period. Sprays, branches, and vines spring from the vases and show to admirable advantage upon the clear ground. The grenadine silk thread used for the black laces sometimes loses its brilliancy in the constant twisting of the bobbins, and this has given rise to the idea that this lace is sometimes made with an admixture of flax thread.

The ground or mesh is lozenge-shaped, crossed at opposite ends by horizontal threads. This forms what



**P**LATE XLIX. — *White Spanish Blonde.*  
*Eighteenth Century.*

## THE LACE BOOK

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sought on account of their beauty and becoming quality.

Two sizes of thread are used, one for the mesh and another for the pattern, and both pattern and mesh are made by one worker. It was not till about 1840 that black laces in the white lace patterns were made, and became almost as much the vogue as the white.

BLONDE NET was a silk bobbin lace with a fine net ground and a heavy pattern. The ground is clear and fine, and the pattern or *toile* is worked with a broad flat strand which glistens prettily, and to this rather showy quality it owes its success, since it is not distinguished by beauty of pattern or by any particular artistic merit.

MIGNONETTE LACE, or *Blonde de Fil*, is another fine light bobbin lace, early in use and much esteemed even before the great Colbert took in hand the lace industries of France. Before the middle of the sixteenth century it was an important trimming, and was made from fine flax bleached and spun in Flanders. It was never made more than an inch or two in width, and so light and delicate was it that it was a favourite trimming for caps. It has survived where costlier laces went down, and is still made in large quantities. The spelling of it varies greatly, from "mennuet" to "minuit," according to the nationality and taste of the speller.

COLBERTEEN, so often mentioned in English satires of the seventeenth century, was a coarse network lace with a large open mesh, used only for edging towels, sheets, etc. It is curious that only this third-rate lace

## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

should have been named after the great minister who did so much for the industry in France.

DENTELLE is the French term for lace. It was not applied, however, till the end of the sixteenth century; before that time laces were called *passemants*.

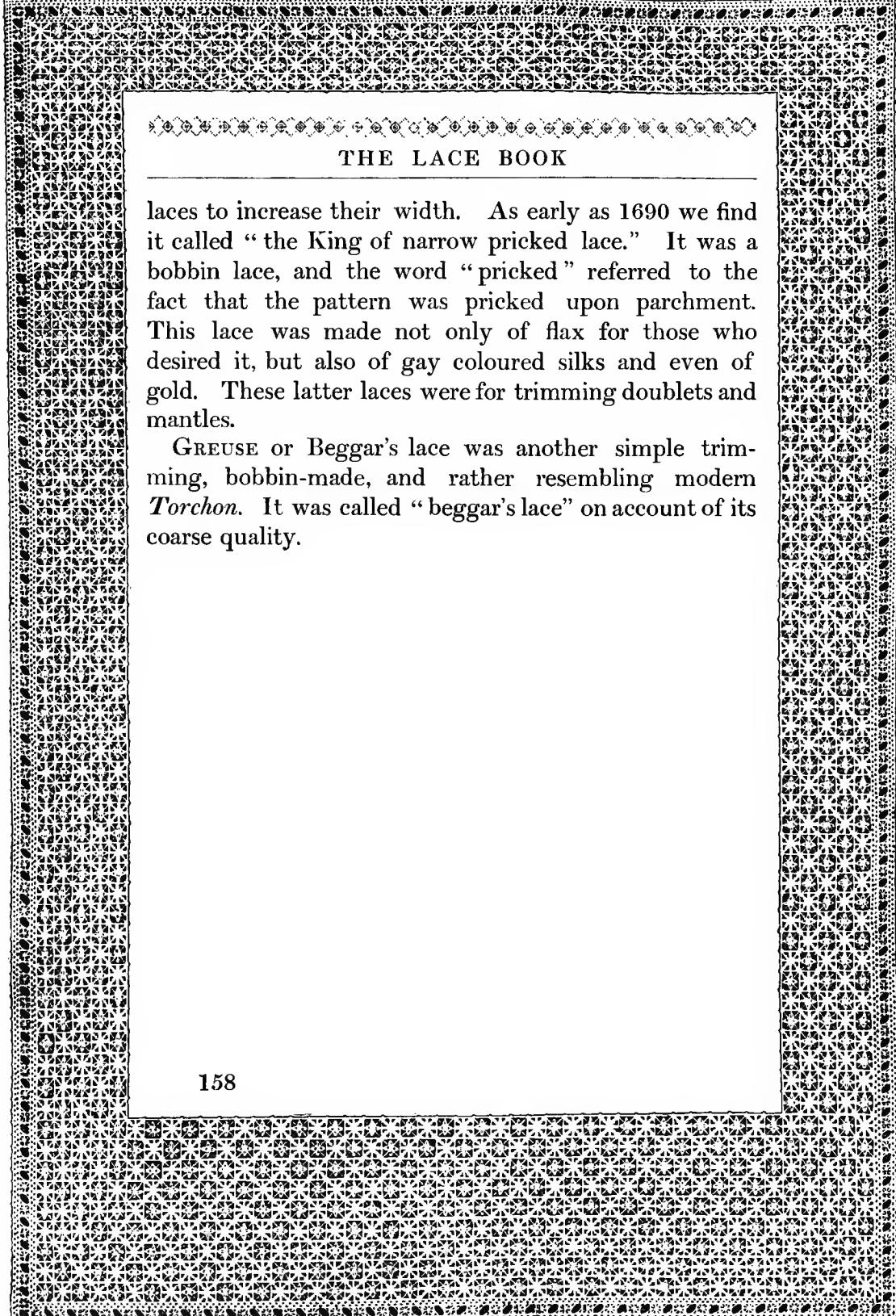
DENTELLE FUSEAU is bobbin lace.

DENTELLE DE FIL is a term covering several varieties of simple thread laces like *Torchon*, or *Dentelle à la Vierge*.

DIEPPE POINT, as lace made at this town was called, in its finer varieties is of the same nature as Valenciennes, but much simpler, so that fewer bobbins are used. This kind of lace has been used since the sixteenth century by the peasant women of Normandy for trimming those marvellous caps with long lappets which are so esteemed in prosperous families and handed down from one generation to another. Flemish thread was used for this lace, both black and white, and the most elaborate patterns did not cost over 30 francs an ell. A school was re-established at Dieppe in 1826, by some sisters from a convent, for even this simple product has suffered from the throes of the Revolution, as well as by the demand for costlier laces by the aristocracy.

There are several small inexpensive laces which have been, and to some extent still are, made in France.

CAMPANE LACE was an ancient lace, now unknown. Much mention is made of it in the contemporary literature of the times, and it was frequently used as an edging, sewed upon muslin ruffles, or even upon narrow

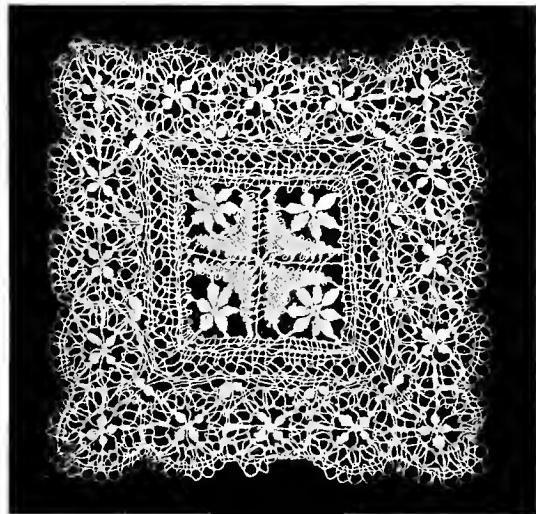
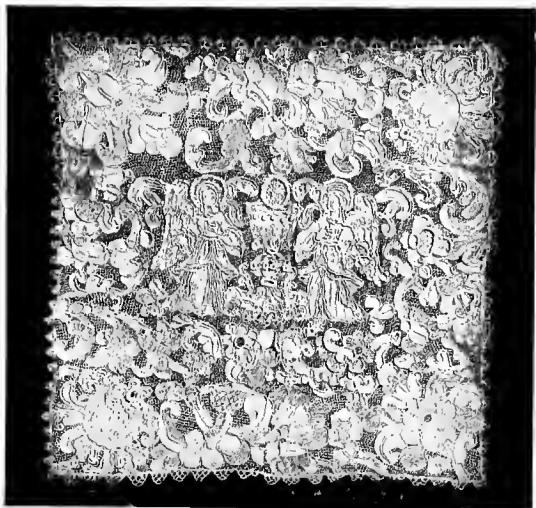


## THE LACE BOOK

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laces to increase their width. As early as 1690 we find it called "the King of narrow pricked lace." It was a bobbin lace, and the word "pricked" referred to the fact that the pattern was pricked upon parchment. This lace was made not only of flax for those who desired it, but also of gay coloured silks and even of gold. These latter laces were for trimming doublets and mantles.

GREUSE or Beggar's lace was another simple trimming, bobbin-made, and rather resembling modern *Torchon*. It was called "beggar's lace" on account of its coarse quality.



**P**LATE L.—A. Chalice veil. Spanish needle point. Seventeenth Century. B. Silk Maltese bobbin lace. Nineteenth Century.



## Spanish Laces

Spain has always been a lace-wearing country, her grandes ruffling it superbly in velvets and gold lace, while with her ladies the national dress is largely composed of this rich fabric. Though consuming great quantities of lace in its most costly form, gold and silver, Spain has never made it in great quantities, but relied on her exports to furnish her with the amount needed. Curiously enough, the Spaniards obtained their laces from France, while the laces most used in France came from Flanders, but this was in 1634, before Colbert came on the scene.

Later, in the eighteenth century, Spain acted upon the policy that foreign superfluities should be prohibited. Her sumptuary law of 1723 "has taken away all pretence for importing all sorts of point and lace of white and black silk." Being a Catholic country, her convents made drawn- and cut-work in great quantities for use in the churches and on ecclesiastical garments, following the development of lace in Italy, Flanders, and France, and copying with more or less success the fine old Points of Venice.

The most famous lace, *Point d'Espagne*, was a gold or silver lace, and the name is thought by most experts to have been given to it on account of the vast quantities required by great Spanish nobles, with whom it was a favourite decoration. Yet this lace was also made in

## THE LACE BOOK

Spain, largely by the Jews, and after their expulsion in 1492 the manufacture decreased greatly, while the demand still continued. As much of these splendid laces were sent from Italy and Flanders, and so great were the sums spent for them, the importation of them was finally prohibited by the government, save such as were necessary for ecclesiastical purposes.

Lord Tyrawley, writing from Lisbon to the Duke of Montague in the first half of the eighteenth century, describes his meeting with the Patriarch on his way to court in his litter, —

—“ which was of crimson velvet, laid all over with gold lace ; followed by his body coach of the same. He had ten led horses, richly caparisoned, and attended by six-and-thirty footmen in crimson velvet clothes finely laced with gold, every servant having a laced cravat and ruffles, with red silk stockings.”

The history of lace in Portugal is approximately the same as it was in Spain, and the dress and equipages of the Portuguese nobles were as extravagant, in the eighteenth century, as those of the Spanish grandees.

During the sixteenth century, when Flanders was Spanish territory, the Spaniards learned all that the Flemings had to teach in the art of bobbin laces, and of twisting and plaiting gold threads.

The convent laces were, however, chiefly made of thread, rich and heavy, and resembling the *Gros Points de Venise* from which they were copied. There were finer laces made, too, like the choice French and Italian laces, and at the dissolution of the monasteries, about the

## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

middle of the nineteenth century, many of these laces were released and sold. Now were revealed for the first time specimens of those rich fabrics on which many a nun spent her eyesight and her life, and unfinished pieces of lace still stitched on their bits of parchment, marked with the name of the sister who was expected to make it, are parts of the property preserved in the convents. They followed the plan of working separate small bits, the pieces being afterward joined by a superior worker, but the laces are in no way distinctive. These delicate laces are not, however, those which suited Spanish taste. After the gold and silver laces, which were sometimes further enriched by embroideries in colour, came the silk lace, both white and black, made in heavy patterns on a net ground.

The gala dress of the Spanish *signora* calls for a white lace mantilla, which is not in the least becoming to her dark style of beauty. This is made of very heavy silk embroidery on net, or is a heavy bobbin lace with a net ground. The black lace mantilla, and lace flounces, two of which were often mounted upon a skirt of brilliant satin, composed the dress of the rich Spanish beauty, and were of this same heavy lace. The simplest mantilla for ordinary occasions was of silk, but this was embellished by a flounce all around it of hand-wide lace.

The earliest sumptuary laws of Spain make no reference to lace, but Philip III, in 1623, required the wearing of simple *rebatos*, without cut-work or lace, for men, and collars and cuffs for women, neither sex being

## THE LACE BOOK

allowed the use of starch. Gold and silver lace was especially prohibited, but this prohibition was repealed for the period of Prince Charles's visit. Spain was long celebrated, and with justice, for the elegance of her silk fabrics and her gold and silver lace, mention of all of which is numerous in the French and English inventories and Wardrobe Accounts of the period. During Queen Elizabeth's time she had a mantle, in the year 1587, trimmed with "bobbin lace of Spanish silk," and from this date downward, coats, mantles, petticoats, and beds were trimmed with it. A Spaniard, writing of Barcelona in 1683, says that not only are gold and silver edgings made there, but also those of silk, thread, and aloe, "with greater perfection than in Flanders."

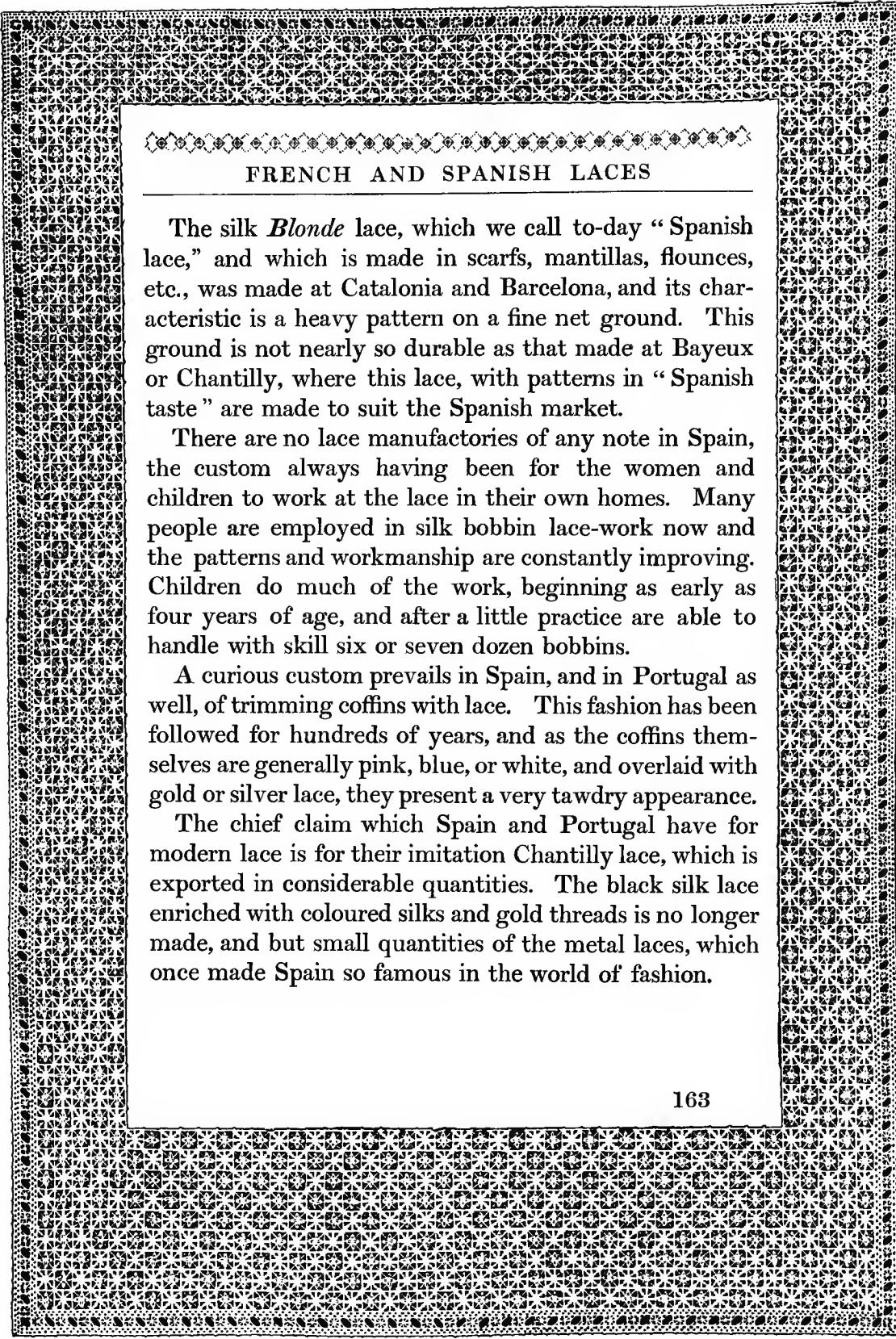
By 1667 so much thread lace was brought into Spain from France as well as from Flanders that the duty was raised from 25 to 250 reals per pound. This necessitated much smuggling, and quantities of lace, under the name of "mosquito net," were brought into Spain via Cadiz, and there are records of the seizure of many vessels.

The gold and silver lace was used for other purposes besides cloaks, gowns, and mantles. Banners were edged with it; hats were laced with it for servants as well as for their masters; shoes were trimmed with it, as also carriages and furniture; and, most curious of all, sheets were embellished with it to the depth of several inches. The most famous of these metal laces were made at Seville, Barcelona, and Valencia.



**PLATE LI.**—*Henrietta Anna, Duchesse d'Orléans (1644-1670). Showing a bertha of straight-edged lace. An early representation of Point de France.*





## FRENCH AND SPANISH LACES

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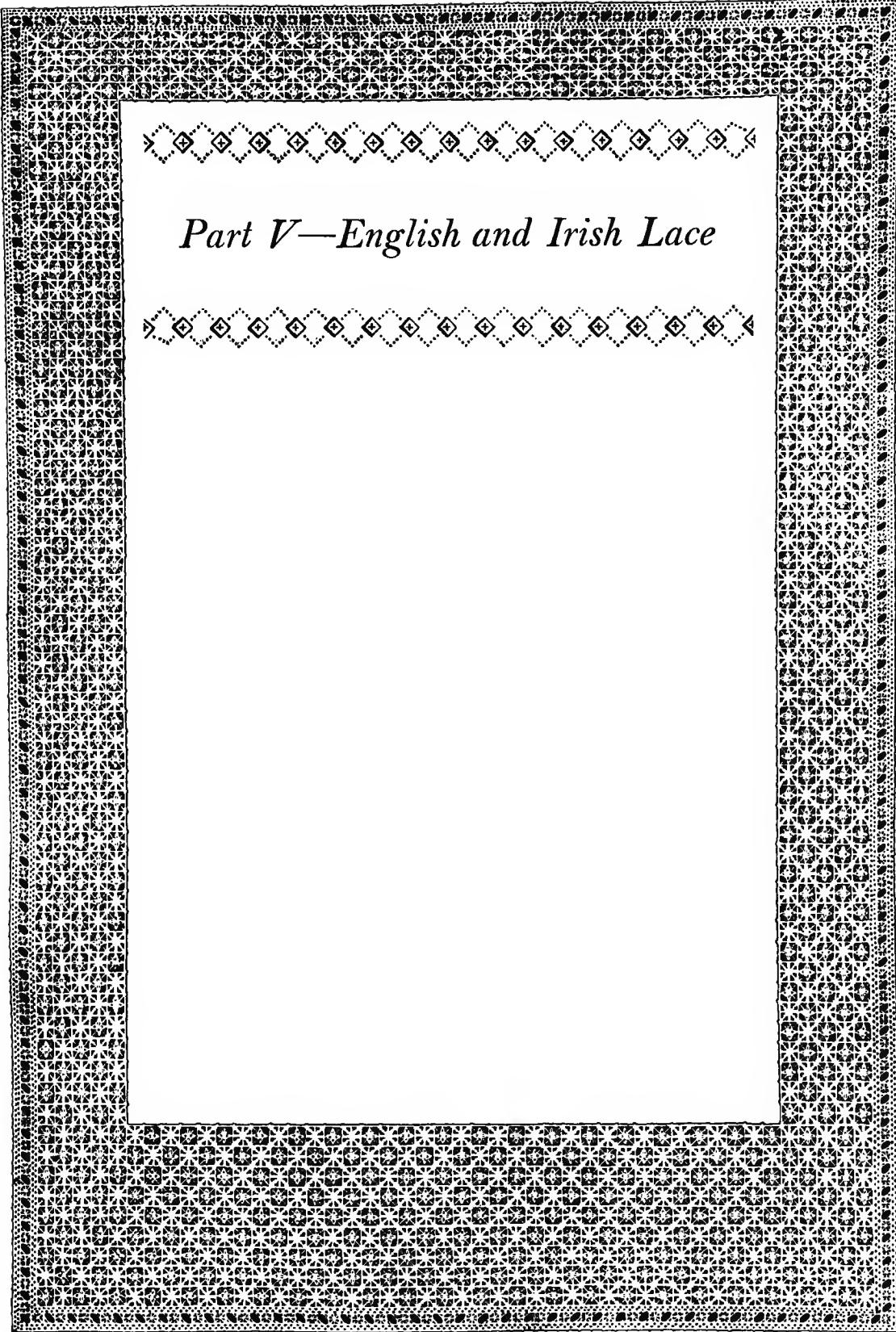
The silk *Blonde* lace, which we call to-day "Spanish lace," and which is made in scarfs, mantillas, flounces, etc., was made at Catalonia and Barcelona, and its characteristic is a heavy pattern on a fine net ground. This ground is not nearly so durable as that made at Bayeux or Chantilly, where this lace, with patterns in "Spanish taste" are made to suit the Spanish market.

There are no lace manufactories of any note in Spain, the custom always having been for the women and children to work at the lace in their own homes. Many people are employed in silk bobbin lace-work now and the patterns and workmanship are constantly improving. Children do much of the work, beginning as early as four years of age, and after a little practice are able to handle with skill six or seven dozen bobbins.

A curious custom prevails in Spain, and in Portugal as well, of trimming coffins with lace. This fashion has been followed for hundreds of years, and as the coffins themselves are generally pink, blue, or white, and overlaid with gold or silver lace, they present a very tawdry appearance.

The chief claim which Spain and Portugal have for modern lace is for their imitation Chantilly lace, which is exported in considerable quantities. The black silk lace enriched with coloured silks and gold threads is no longer made, and but small quantities of the metal laces, which once made Spain so famous in the world of fashion.

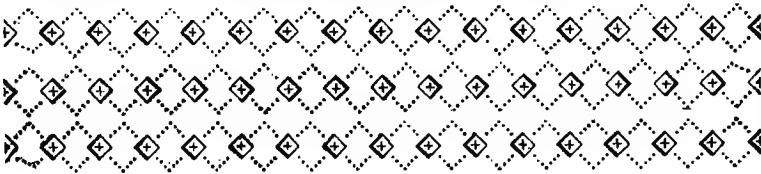




*Part V—English and Irish Lace*

*“THE real good of a piece of lace, then, you will find, is that it should show, first, that the designer of it had a pretty fancy; next, that the maker of it had fine fingers; lastly, that the wearer of it has worthiness or dignity enough to obtain what is difficult to obtain, and common sense enough not to wear it on all occasions.”*

— JOHN RUSKIN.

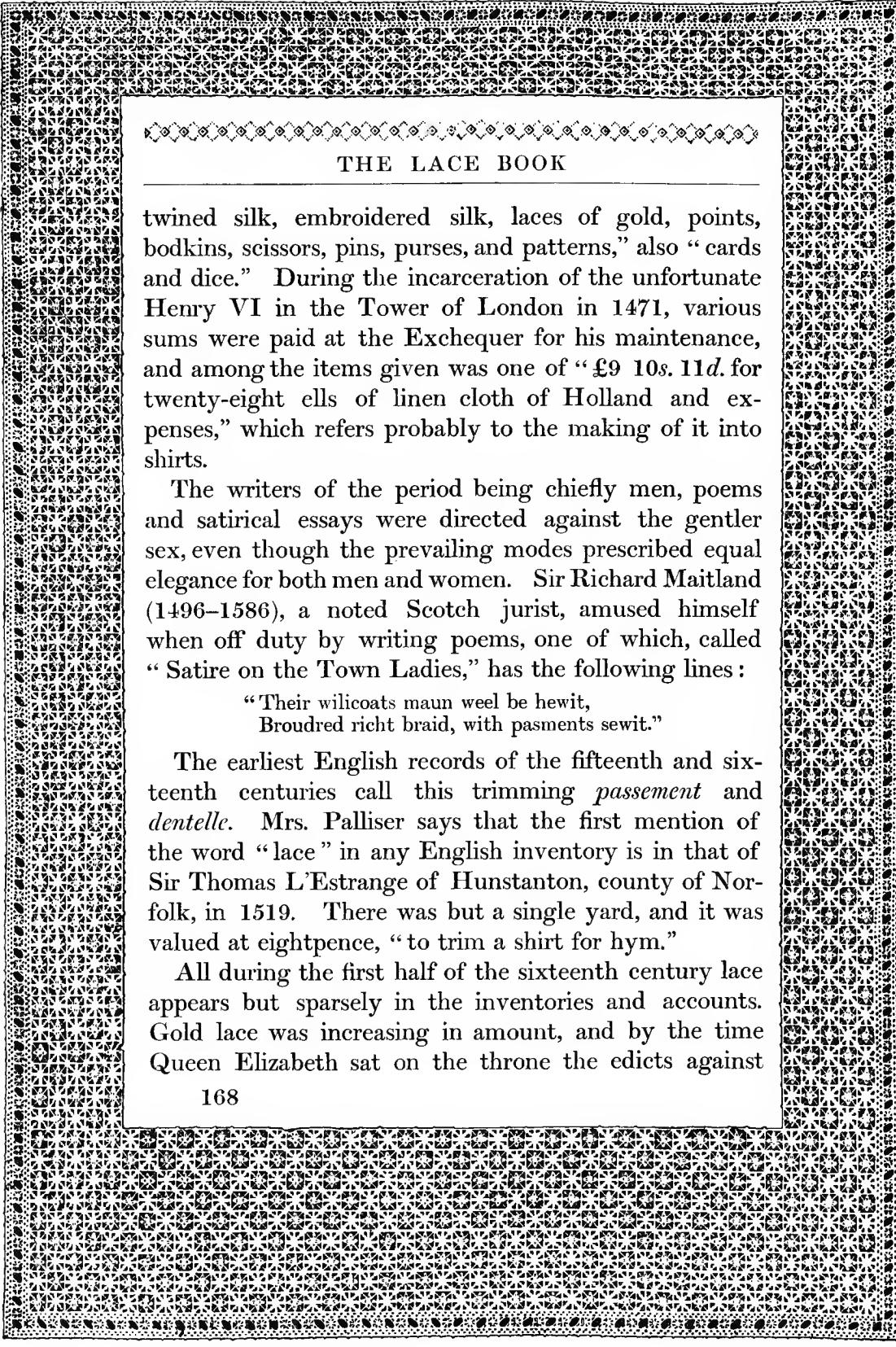


## *Part V—English and Irish Lace*

**T**HERE is scarcely a woman who at one time or another has not had a desire for a piece of lace known as "English thread." This term is so broad and covers so great a variety of makes and styles that it is quite bewildering for the novice to determine whether her bit shall come from "Bedford, Bucks, Dorset, or Devon."

In the making of lace, England was not in the field as early as either Italy or Flanders, and the Italians took advantage of their forwardness in the craft to send to England lace of "Venys gold," as well as that of Genoa, Lucca, and Florence.

The term "lace," often used in the expense accounts of sovereigns from the time of Edward IV (1460), has always been supposed to mean the trimming, instead of which it refers to the strings or ties by which various parts of the garments were kept together, pins not then being in common use. The statute of the third year of Edward IV's reign enumerates the following wrought goods not to be imported, and ladies were to rely on home manufactures for "laces, corsets, ribbands, fringes,



## THE LACE BOOK

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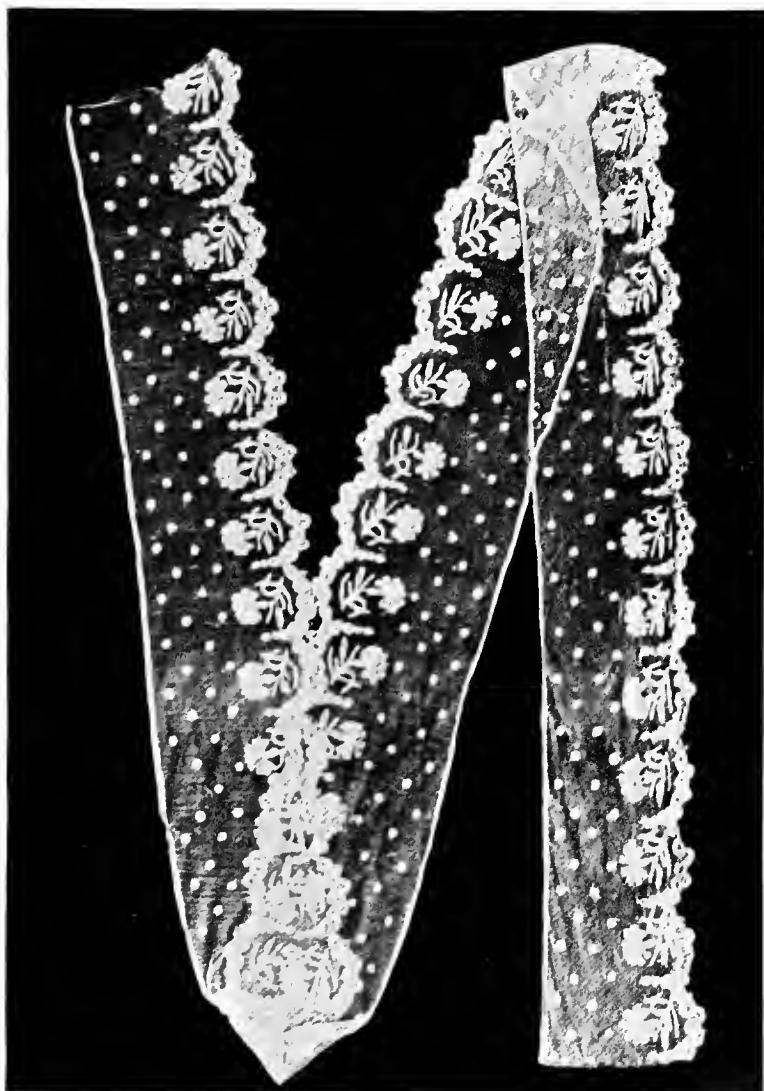
twined silk, embroidered silk, laces of gold, points, bodkins, scissors, pins, purses, and patterns," also "cards and dice." During the incarceration of the unfortunate Henry VI in the Tower of London in 1471, various sums were paid at the Exchequer for his maintenance, and among the items given was one of "£9 10s. 11d. for twenty-eight ells of linen cloth of Holland and expenses," which refers probably to the making of it into shirts.

The writers of the period being chiefly men, poems and satirical essays were directed against the gentler sex, even though the prevailing modes prescribed equal elegance for both men and women. Sir Richard Maitland (1496-1586), a noted Scotch jurist, amused himself when off duty by writing poems, one of which, called "Satire on the Town Ladies," has the following lines:

"Their wilcoats maun weel be hewit,  
Broudred richt braid, with pasments sewit."

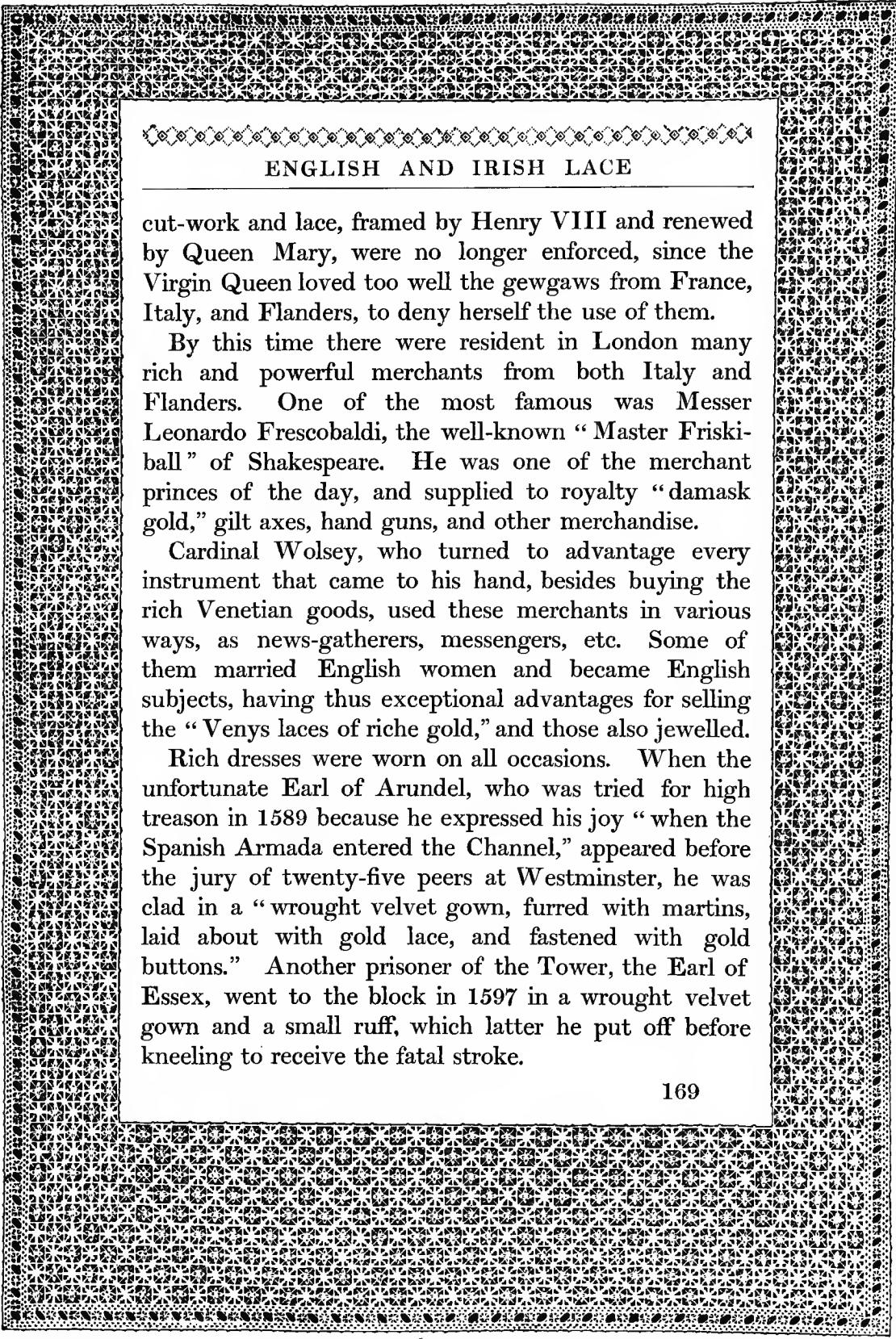
The earliest English records of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries call this trimming *passement* and *dentelle*. Mrs. Palliser says that the first mention of the word "lace" in any English inventory is in that of Sir Thomas L'Estrange of Hunstanton, county of Norfolk, in 1519. There was but a single yard, and it was valued at eightpence, "to trim a shirt for hym."

All during the first half of the sixteenth century lace appears but sparsely in the inventories and accounts. Gold lace was increasing in amount, and by the time Queen Elizabeth sat on the throne the edicts against



**P**LATE LII.—*Old Honiton, with needle-made ground and carnation sprigs. Early Eighteenth Century.*





## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

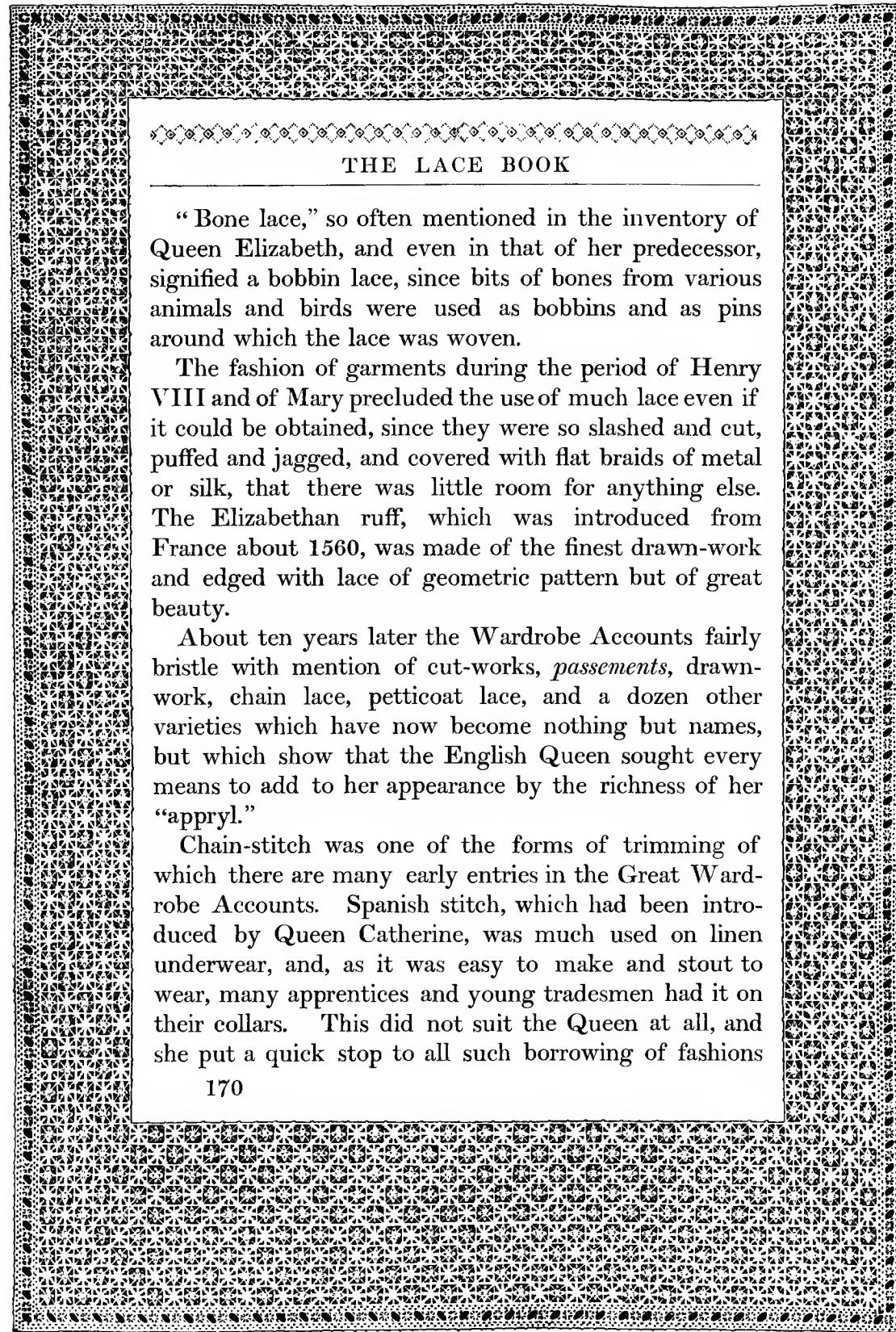
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cut-work and lace, framed by Henry VIII and renewed by Queen Mary, were no longer enforced, since the Virgin Queen loved too well the gewgaws from France, Italy, and Flanders, to deny herself the use of them.

By this time there were resident in London many rich and powerful merchants from both Italy and Flanders. One of the most famous was Messer Leonardo Frescobaldi, the well-known "Master Friskiball" of Shakespeare. He was one of the merchant princes of the day, and supplied to royalty "damask gold," gilt axes, hand guns, and other merchandise.

Cardinal Wolsey, who turned to advantage every instrument that came to his hand, besides buying the rich Venetian goods, used these merchants in various ways, as news-gatherers, messengers, etc. Some of them married English women and became English subjects, having thus exceptional advantages for selling the "Venys laces of riche gold," and those also jewelled.

Rich dresses were worn on all occasions. When the unfortunate Earl of Arundel, who was tried for high treason in 1589 because he expressed his joy "when the Spanish Armada entered the Channel," appeared before the jury of twenty-five peers at Westminster, he was clad in a "wrought velvet gown, furred with martins, laid about with gold lace, and fastened with gold buttons." Another prisoner of the Tower, the Earl of Essex, went to the block in 1597 in a wrought velvet gown and a small ruff, which latter he put off before kneeling to receive the fatal stroke.



## THE LACE BOOK

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“Bone lace,” so often mentioned in the inventory of Queen Elizabeth, and even in that of her predecessor, signified a bobbin lace, since bits of bones from various animals and birds were used as bobbins and as pins around which the lace was woven.

The fashion of garments during the period of Henry VIII and of Mary precluded the use of much lace even if it could be obtained, since they were so slashed and cut, puffed and jagged, and covered with flat braids of metal or silk, that there was little room for anything else. The Elizabethan ruff, which was introduced from France about 1560, was made of the finest drawn-work and edged with lace of geometric pattern but of great beauty.

About ten years later the Wardrobe Accounts fairly bristle with mention of cut-works, *passements*, drawn-work, chain lace, petticoat lace, and a dozen other varieties which have now become nothing but names, but which show that the English Queen sought every means to add to her appearance by the richness of her “appryl.”

Chain-stitch was one of the forms of trimming of which there are many early entries in the Great Wardrobe Accounts. Spanish stitch, which had been introduced by Queen Catherine, was much used on linen underwear, and, as it was easy to make and stout to wear, many apprentices and young tradesmen had it on their collars. This did not suit the Queen at all, and she put a quick stop to all such borrowing of fashions

## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

from their betters by ordering that the next apprentice so caught should be publicly whipped in the hall of the Guild to which he belonged.

A contemporary, speaking of the gowns of the period, says of them :

“Some are of silk, some of velvet, some of grograin, some of taffeta, some of scarlet, and some of fine cloth of 10, 20 or 40 shillings the yard. But if the whole garment be not of silk or velvet, then the same must be layed with lace two or three fingers broad all over the gown; or if lace is not fine enough for them, he says, they must be decorated with broad gardes of velvet edged with lace.”

So much for feminine attire.

By 1595 the peasecod-bellied doublet was quilted and stuffed with four, five, or six pounds of bombast, the exterior being of satin, silk, velvet, camlet, gold, or silver stuff, “slashed, jagged, cut, carved, pinched, and laced with all kinds of costly lace of divers and sundry colours.”

Gascoigne, who about 1570 wrote his “Satire on the Court Ladies,” gives them credit for unbridled folly in copying men’s clothes :

“Women masking in men’s weeds,  
With Dutchkin doublets, and with jerkins jagged,  
With Spanish spangs and ruffles set out of France,  
With high-copt hats and feathers flaunt-a-flaunt,”—

—and many other extravagances beside.

Jasper Mayne, who wrote some comedies illustrative of city manners in the time of Charles I, also wrote some poems. He was archdeacon of Chichester, and, as might be expected, had little sympathy with the

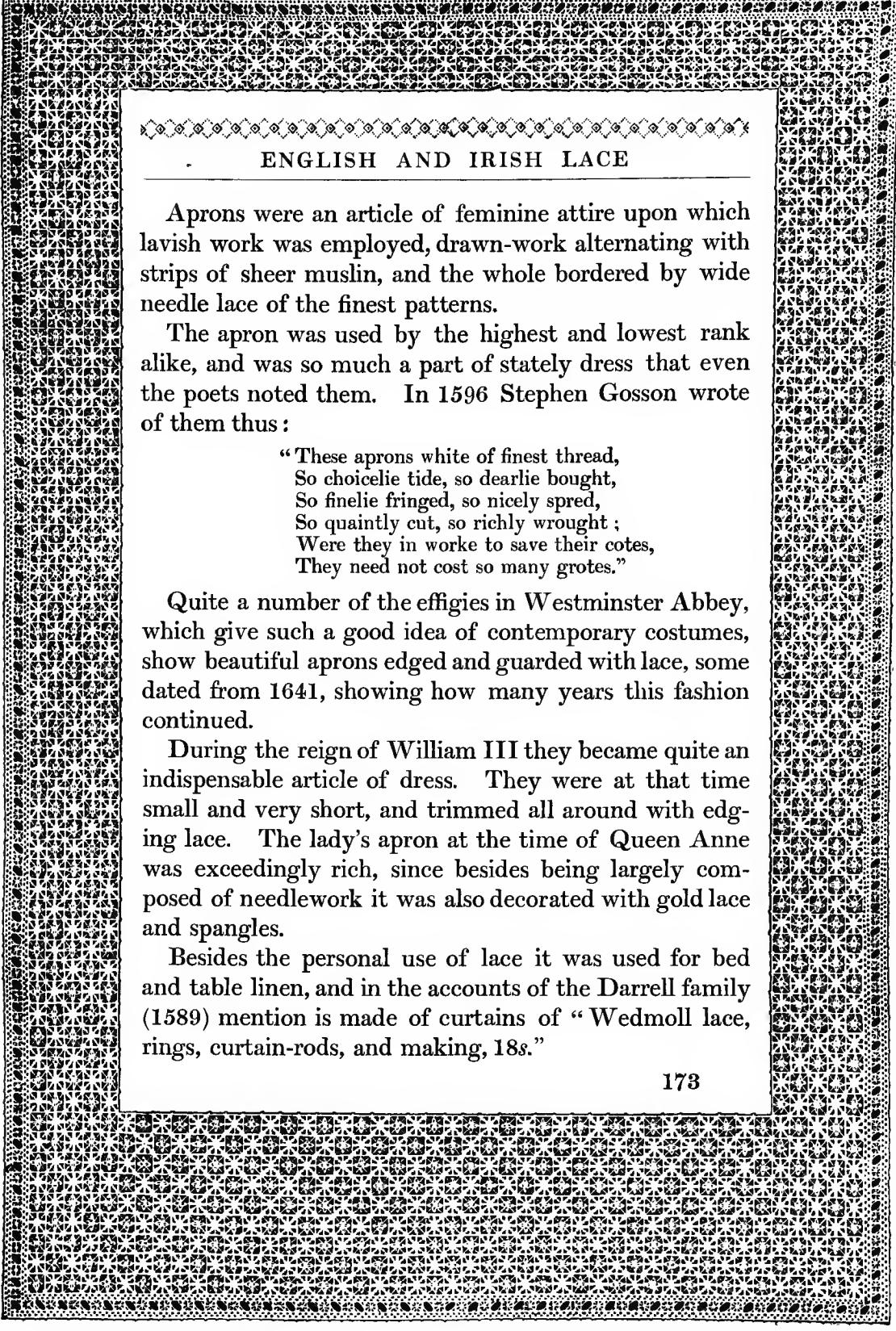
## THE LACE BOOK

Puritans and their tenets of faith. One of his satirical poems, written about 1650, was called "The Puritanical Waiting-Maid," and her mistress thus describes the maid's foibles :

" She works religious petticoats ; for flowers  
She'll make church histories. Her needle doth  
So sanctify my cushionets ! Besides  
My smock-sleeves have such holy embroideries,  
And are so learned, that I fear in time,  
All my apparel will be quoted by  
Some pure instructor."

The cloaks of both sexes were faced with costly lace of silver, gold, or silk, and with members of the court the wearing of rich clothes was a positive necessity.

Arabella Stuart, that unfortunate princess whose debts and matrimonial difficulties caused her to pass many weary years in the Tower, never lost her taste for fine clothes. Her last appearance at court was June 4, 1610, when her cousin was created Prince of Wales. The Queen gave a grand masque called "Tethys' Festival ; or, the Queen's Masque." The dresses were designed by Inigo Jones in honour of the occasion, and the Lady Arabella took a leading part. She was "Nymph of the Trent," all the ladies representing different rivers. She wore one of those elaborate and costly costumes which added so much to her money difficulties. Her "head tire was composed of shells and coral. The long skirt of her gown was wrought with lace waved round about like a river, and on the edges sedge and seaweed, all of gold."



## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

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Aprons were an article of feminine attire upon which lavish work was employed, drawn-work alternating with strips of sheer muslin, and the whole bordered by wide needle lace of the finest patterns.

The apron was used by the highest and lowest rank alike, and was so much a part of stately dress that even the poets noted them. In 1596 Stephen Gosson wrote of them thus :

“These aprons white of finest thread,  
So choicelie tide, so dearlie bought,  
So finelie fringed, so nicely spred,  
So quaintly cut, so richly wrought ;  
Were they in worke to save their cotes,  
They need not cost so many grotes.”

Quite a number of the effigies in Westminster Abbey, which give such a good idea of contemporary costumes, show beautiful aprons edged and guarded with lace, some dated from 1641, showing how many years this fashion continued.

During the reign of William III they became quite an indispensable article of dress. They were at that time small and very short, and trimmed all around with edging lace. The lady's apron at the time of Queen Anne was exceedingly rich, since besides being largely composed of needlework it was also decorated with gold lace and spangles.

Besides the personal use of lace it was used for bed and table linen, and in the accounts of the Darrell family (1589) mention is made of curtains of “Wedmoll lace, rings, curtain-rods, and making, 18s.”

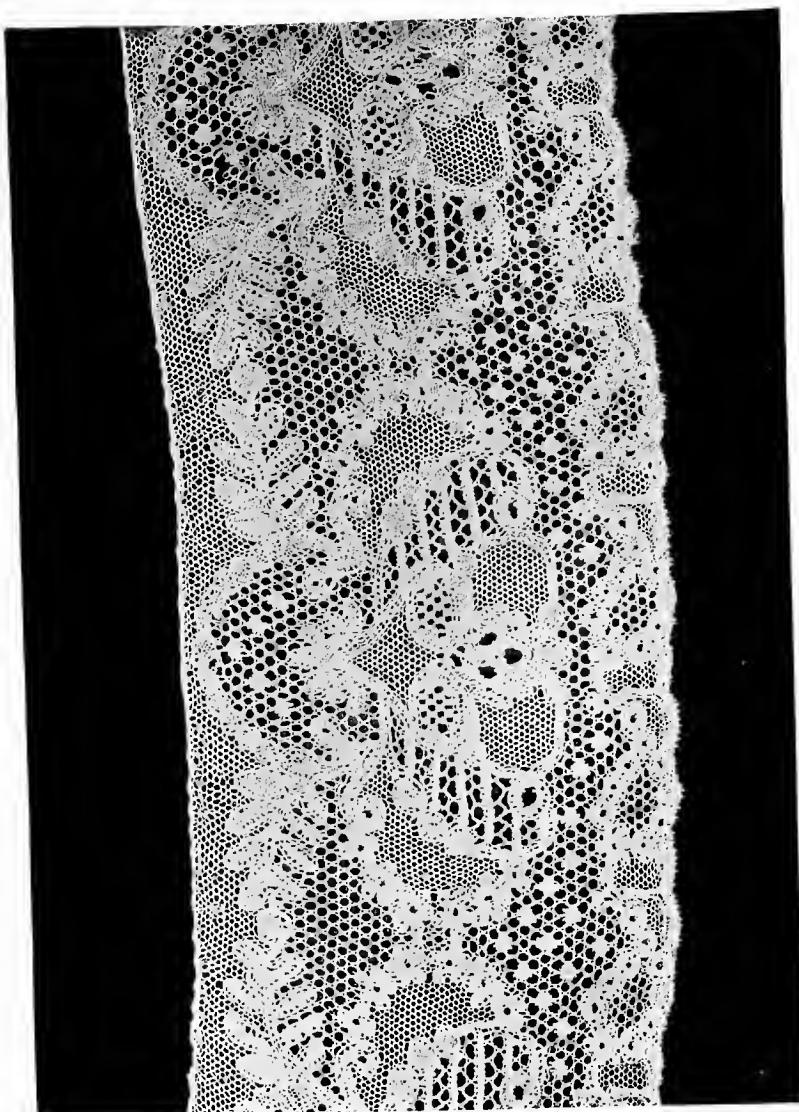
## THE LACE BOOK

There is still to be seen in Anne Hathaway's cottage at Stratford-on-Avon a linen chest containing, among other things, a linen sheet with a strip of cut-work down the middle, with pillow-cases to match. These are marked "E. H.," and are said always to have been used by the Hathaway family on special occasions, such as births, deaths, and marriages. Many of the old English families are proud of similar linen which has been in use two or three centuries and carefully preserved.

Laces were sold in England, as well as on the Continent, by travelling merchants who went from one town to another. They were also sold at the various fairs, which were such important occasions in the early history of England. At one of these fairs, held in the chapel of St. Etheldreda (or St. Audrey, as she was more often called), daughter of King Auna, who established the Abbey of Ely, lace of a coarse quality was sold which became known as "Tawdry lace." Shakespeare mentions it in "Twelfth Night," and from it has no doubt come our word "tawdry," signifying something showy and coarse.

In an old play written in 1607, called "Lingua ; or, the Combat of the Tongue and the Five Senses for Superiority," is given a list of many of the articles of a lady's wardrobe. So many things made or trimmed with lace are enumerated that we give an extract. One of the characters says :

"Five hours ago I set a dozen maids to attire a boy like a nice gentlewoman, but there is such a doing with their looking-glasses,



**P**LATE LIII.—*An unusually wide and beautiful piece of bobbin-made Buckinghamshire lace.*  
*Eighteenth Century.*



## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

pinning, unpinning ; setting, unsetting ; formings and conformings ; painting of blue veins and cheeks. Such a stir with sticks, combs, cascanets, dressings, purls, fall-squares, busks, bodices, scarfs, neck-laces, carcanets, rabatoes, borders, tires, fans, palisadoes, puffs, cuffs, ruffs, muffs, pusles, fusles, partlets, fringlets, bandlets, fillets, corslets, pendulets, amulets, annulets, bracelets, and so many *lets* [*i.e.* stops], that she is scarce dressed to the girdle, and now there is such a calling for fardingales, kirtles, busk-points, shoe-ties, and the like, that seven peddlers' shops, nay, all Stourbridge fair, will scarcely furnish her."

In a comedy of the same period, called "Eastward Hoe!" one character says to her sister :

" Do you wear your quoif with a London ticket, your stamen petticoat with two guards, the buffen gown with tuftaffetie cap and velvet lace."

By 1640 the hood and fardingale appear, and dress for both men and women is distinguished by its rich ornate sleeves and elegant falling collar.

The wearing of the periwig crossed the water from France about 1645, as the Grand Monarch had started the fashion, and the lace collar gave place to the *jabot*, or laced band. The English term for this article was neck-cloth or cravat, and the edging was rich Brussels or Flanders lace.

The ceremonial life of English royalty was always a subject of grave moment. The procession through the city to Westminster at the coronation of a monarch has always been, even down to our own day, a spectacle where the greatest magnificence and taste were displayed. We have the words of a contemporary to describe that procession when Charles II was crowned on April 23,

## THE LACE BOOK

1661. After giving the order of the procession, the positions of the nobility, the great officers of state, the royal household, the principal gentry of the kingdom, etc., he goes on to say :

“ It were in vain to attempt to describe this solemnity ; it was so far from being utterable that it was almost inconceivable ; and much wonder it caused to outlandish persons, who were acquainted with our late troubles and confusions, how it was possible for the English to appear in so rich and stately a manner, for it is incredible to think what costly clothes were worn that day ; the cloaks could hardly be seen what silk or satin they were made of, for the gold and silver laces and embroidery that were laid upon them : besides the inestimable value and treasure of diamonds, pearls, and other jewels, worn upon their backs and in their hats ; to omit the sumptuous and rich liveries of their pages and foot-men ; the numerousness of these liveries and their orderly march ; as also the stately equipage of the esquires attending each earl by his horse’s side ; so that all the world that saw it could not but confess that what they had seen before was but solemn mummery to the most august, noble, and true glories of this great day. Even the vaunting French confessed their pomps of the late marriage with the Infanta of Spain, at their Majesties’ entrance into Paris, to be inferior in state, gallantry, and riches to this most glorious cavalcade from the Tower.”

Charles II himself on this auspicious occasion wore a robe or sort of surplice of fine lawn trimmed with Flanders lace at eighteen shillings the yard. This, too, in face of the fact that he had issued a proclamation enforcing an act of his father prohibiting the entry into the Kingdom of foreign bone lace.

The next year, 1662, another Act was passed, prohibiting bone lace cut-work and *passemants*; all foreign bone lace being forfeited, and a penalty of £100 (\$500) to be paid by the offender.

## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

The King, however, and the royal family seem to have considered themselves exempt from such stringent laws, and the curious Latin of the Great Wardrobe Accounts are rich in items of lace both from Flanders and Venice, to trim the King's cravats, shirts, pillow-beres, tooth and toilet cloths.

The dignity of the nation was upheld by its ambassadors abroad, whose dress, as well as that of their household, was very magnificent. Lady Fanshawe gives the following description of her husband's costume on a state occasion at Madrid in October, 1644, when he was ambassador. She says that he was—

—“dressed in a very rich suit of clothes of a dark *fillemente* brocade, laced with silver and gold lace, nine laces, every one as broad as my hand, and a little silver and gold laid between them, both of very curious workmanship. His suit was trimmed with scarlet taffety ribbon, his stockings of white silk upon long scarlet silk ones; his shoes black with scarlet shoe-strings and garters; his linen very fine laced with very rich Flanders lace; a black beaver buttoned on the left side with a jewel valued at £1,200.”

The comparative moderation of the Commonwealth produced, as was natural, a revulsion in favour of unlimited extravagance, and no one chronicles it more pleasingly than Pepys. His diary for 1662 records the laces worn by the ladies of the court, his own expenditures, and what Mrs. Pepys was able to get from him for her own wear, and many other references to the modes as, for example :

“Went with my wife, by coach, to the New Exchange, to buy her some things; where we saw some new fashion pettycoats of

## THE LACE BOOK

sarcenet, with a black broad lace printed round the bottom and before, very handsome."

He has for himself a "white suit with silver lace to his coat." Pepys was never quite satisfied if his things did not show for their full value, and one of the entries in his diary, recording that he and his wife went to church, says :

"My wife had on her new petticoat that she bought yesterday, which indeed is a very fine cloth and a very fine lace; but that being of a light colour and the lace all silver, it makes no great show."

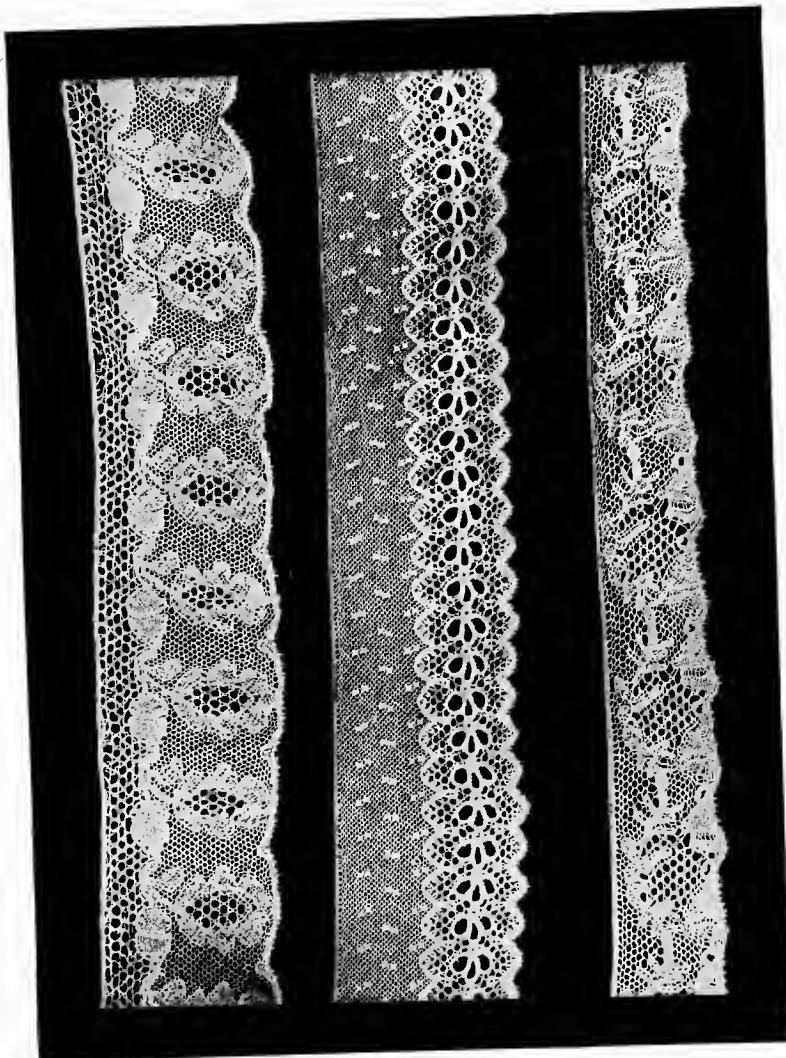
He heard that the King (Charles II) rode in the Park, so he went to see him.

"By and by the King and Queen, who looked in this dress, a white laced waistcoate and a crimson short petticoat, and her hair dressed *à la negligence*, mighty pretty; and the King rode hand in hand with her."

On another occasion he takes his wife to drive in the Park for the first time in a coach of their own :

"My wife extraordinary fine, with her flowered tabby gown that she made two years ago, now laced exceeding pretty."

With this desire for lace reaching through all classes, of course many women, Mrs. Pepys among the number, made it with more or less success for themselves. Pattern-books were scarce and came high, and from this need of patterns for domestic work came the samplers, or "Sam cloths," as they were called. Fifty years before the time of Mrs. Pepys there is mention of samplers. In Chappell's "Popular Music of the Olden Time" it is



**PLATE LIV.**—*A. Devonshire Trolley lace.  
B. Bedfordshire "Baby lace." C. Bucking-  
hamshire Trolley lace. All are bobbin laces.*



## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

stated that there was a collection of songs entitled : "The Crown Garland of Golden Roses" (1612), and among them was "A Short and Sweet Sonnet Made by One of the Maides of Honour upon the Death of Queen Elizabeth, Which She Sewed upon a Sampler in Red Silk ; to a New Tune, or Phillida Flouts Me."

The ordinary sampler was not so elaborate a work of art as this, but a strip of linen, occasionally mounted upon a little roller, on which strip were embroidered patterns, samples of drawn-work and lace, which could be kept for reference or lent to friends.

The earliest known English sampler that is dated is a small bit of linen six and a half inches long by six inches wide, dated 1643. It consists of two strips of very beautiful lace, one in conventional design, and the other having two figures, a Cupid drawing his bow at a lady who holds up her hand in protest. The foundation is a coarse brown linen, and, in addition to the date, Elizabeth Hinde, the maker, has worked her name on a little strip of finer linen which is sewed to the bottom. This is in the South Kensington Museum, London. Most of these early samplers, many fine examples of which are preserved in London, were long and narrow bits of linen with a variety of embroidery patterns worked on them in silk, and with only one or two bits of cut-work or lace work.

In the eighteenth century the fashion for embroidering quaint verses prevailed, and such good moral mottoes as the following are by no means uncommon :

## THE LACE BOOK

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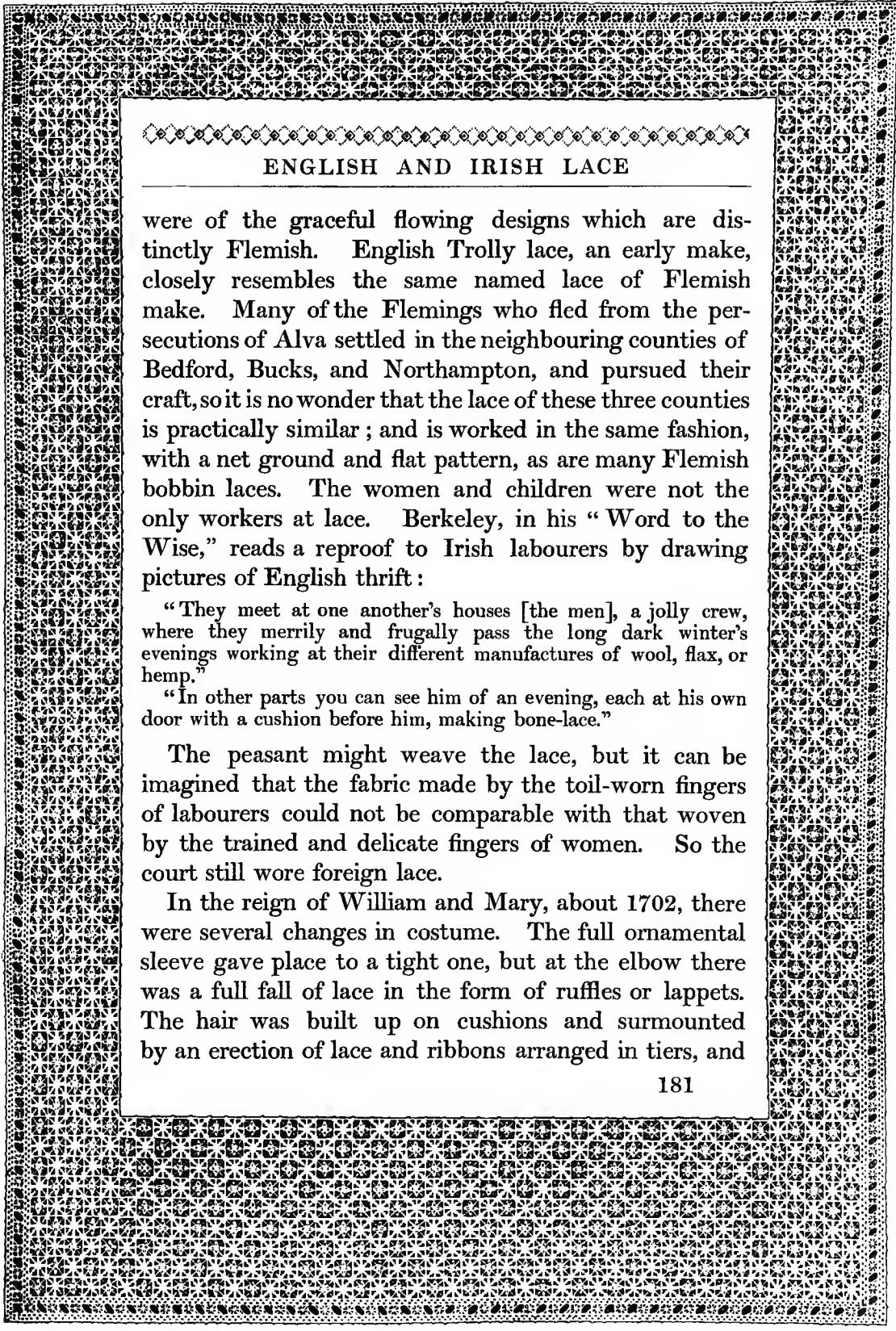
“Look well to what you take in hand,  
For larin is better than house or land,  
When land is gone and money spent,  
Then larin is most excellent.”

A sampler made by Mary Saunders was “wrought in the ninth year of her age, one thousand seven hundred and seventeen,”—the above in the finest stitchery, and with a quantity of patterns, also with a “magic square” filled with numbers.

Like most old things, samplers have had a remarkable rise in price during the past few years. Very large sums have been given for even mediocre examples. At a recent sale at Sotheby's £8 (\$40) was given for a sampler in good condition, dated 1679, while one less perfect brought £6 4s (\$31).

While it is true that lace was made in England, indeed in London itself, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that the manufacture extended over an area which included the counties of Dorset, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Oxford, and Devon, it was only foreign laces which were worn at court and by men and women alike. The making of lace never seems to have become an important staple in any part of England, and in many counties where once the industry flourished there are now no traces left of it.

The laces of England, chiefly bobbin-made, are said to have been taught to English workers by the industrious Flemings. Certain it is that the old patterns



## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

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were of the graceful flowing designs which are distinctly Flemish. English Trolley lace, an early make, closely resembles the same named lace of Flemish make. Many of the Flemings who fled from the persecutions of Alva settled in the neighbouring counties of Bedford, Bucks, and Northampton, and pursued their craft, so it is no wonder that the lace of these three counties is practically similar ; and is worked in the same fashion, with a net ground and flat pattern, as are many Flemish bobbin laces. The women and children were not the only workers at lace. Berkeley, in his "Word to the Wise," reads a reproof to Irish labourers by drawing pictures of English thrift :

"They meet at one another's houses [the men], a jolly crew, where they merrily and frugally pass the long dark winter's evenings working at their different manufactures of wool, flax, or hemp."

"In other parts you can see him of an evening, each at his own door with a cushion before him, making bone-lace."

The peasant might weave the lace, but it can be imagined that the fabric made by the toil-worn fingers of labourers could not be comparable with that woven by the trained and delicate fingers of women. So the court still wore foreign lace.

In the reign of William and Mary, about 1702, there were several changes in costume. The full ornamental sleeve gave place to a tight one, but at the elbow there was a full fall of lace in the form of ruffles or lappets. The hair was built up on cushions and surmounted by an erection of lace and ribbons arranged in tiers, and

## THE LACE BOOK

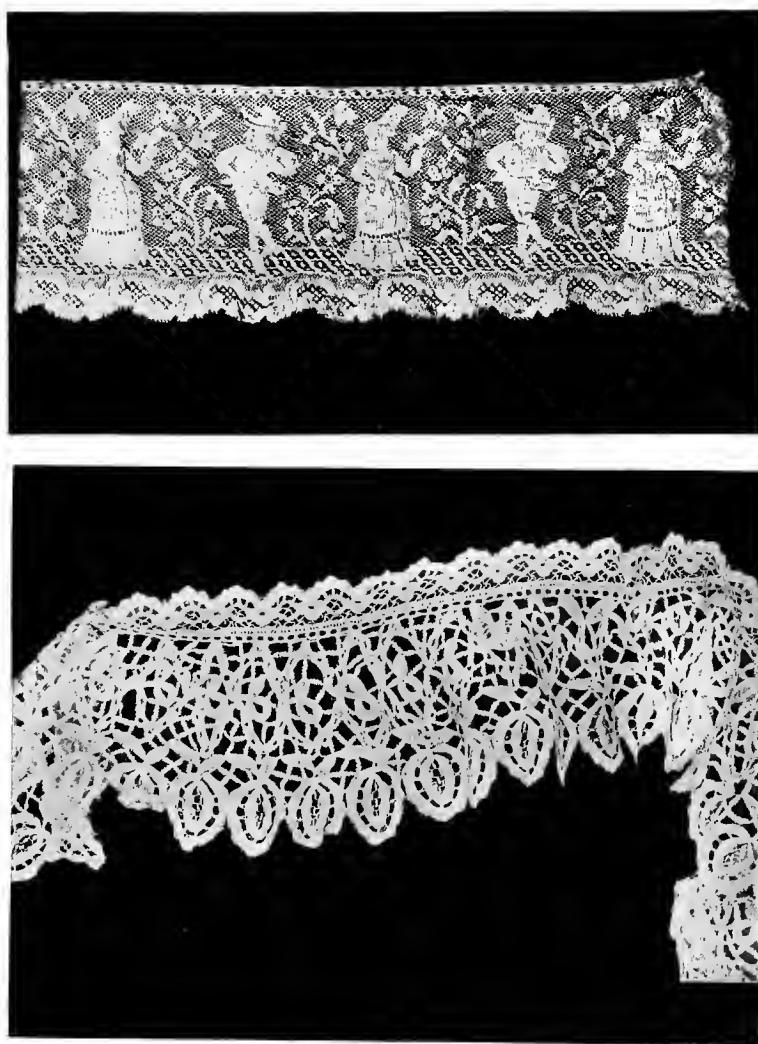
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called a tower, or *commode*. Streamers of lace fell down on either side, and are spoken of as "pinners edged with Colberteen," a name often given to French lace in English records.

In the manufacture of bone lace the county of Buckinghamshire surpassed her sister counties in receiving recognition for this fabric, which, however, was accounted inferior to that of Flanders make. Before 1623 there had been less made here, since in that year we read that owing to the monopolies of James I the people suffered great distress, owing to "the bone lace-making being much dismayed."

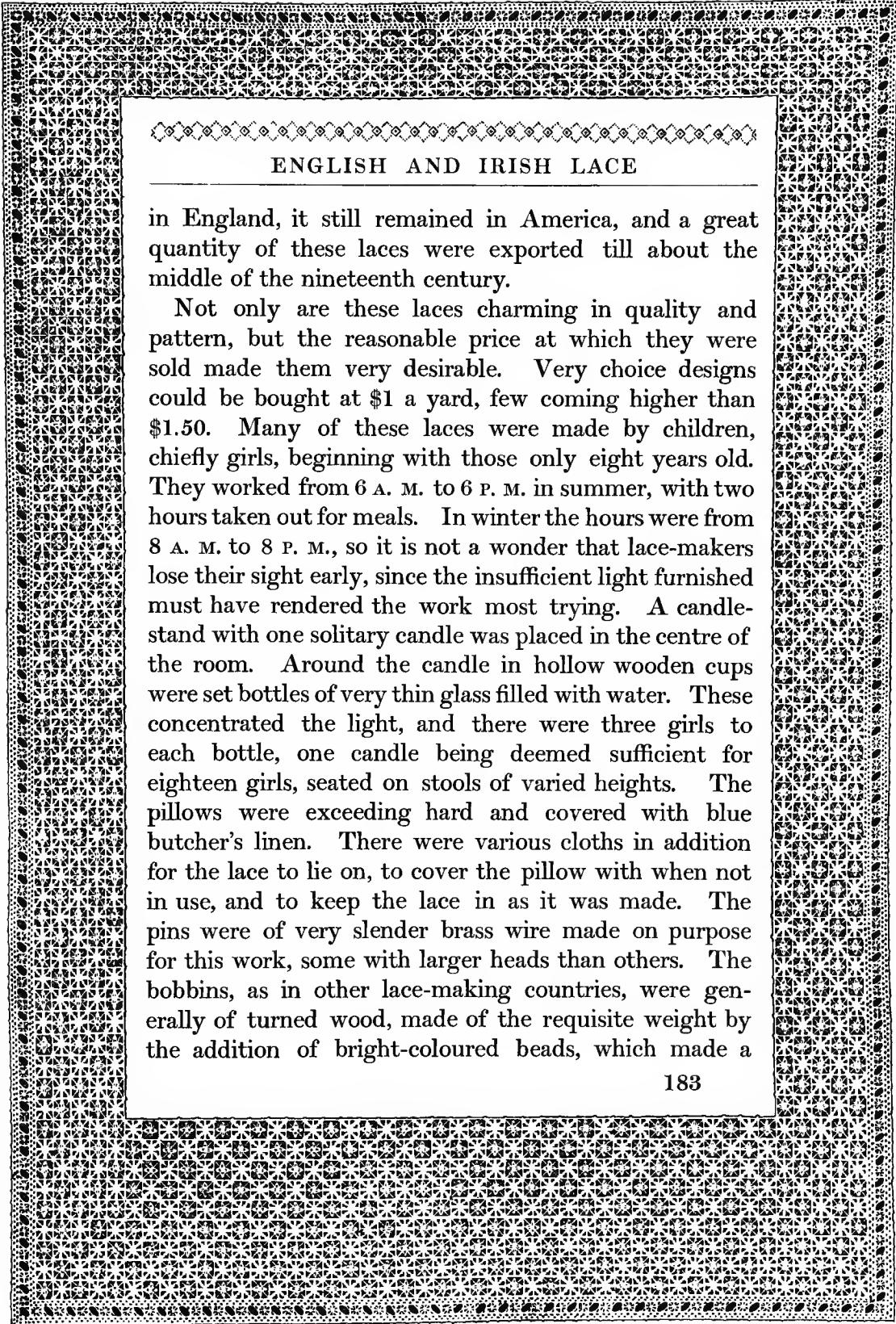
The southern part of Buckinghamshire was justly celebrated for the lace produced, contemporary writers calling it of the finest quality, and some of it was certainly very beautiful. By 1680 the lace from High Wycombe was in great esteem, and, beside edging, was made in veils and other piece lace.

The "baby laces" of Northamptonshire, while not appearing particularly early, are very pretty. Of course the earliest are quite frank copies of Flanders lace, with bright clear grounds, and simple little patterns, generally floral, running along the edge. While these laces are all bobbin-made they are called "point," a term usually applied to needle laces, and their fineness and beauty bring them well into competition with early Mechlin and Brussels. These narrow laces remained in fashion many years as the trimming for infants' caps. When the style had become obsolete



**PLATE LV.**—*A. English bobbin-made lace. Seventeenth Century. B. Honiton. Bobbin-made. Middle of the Nineteenth Century.*



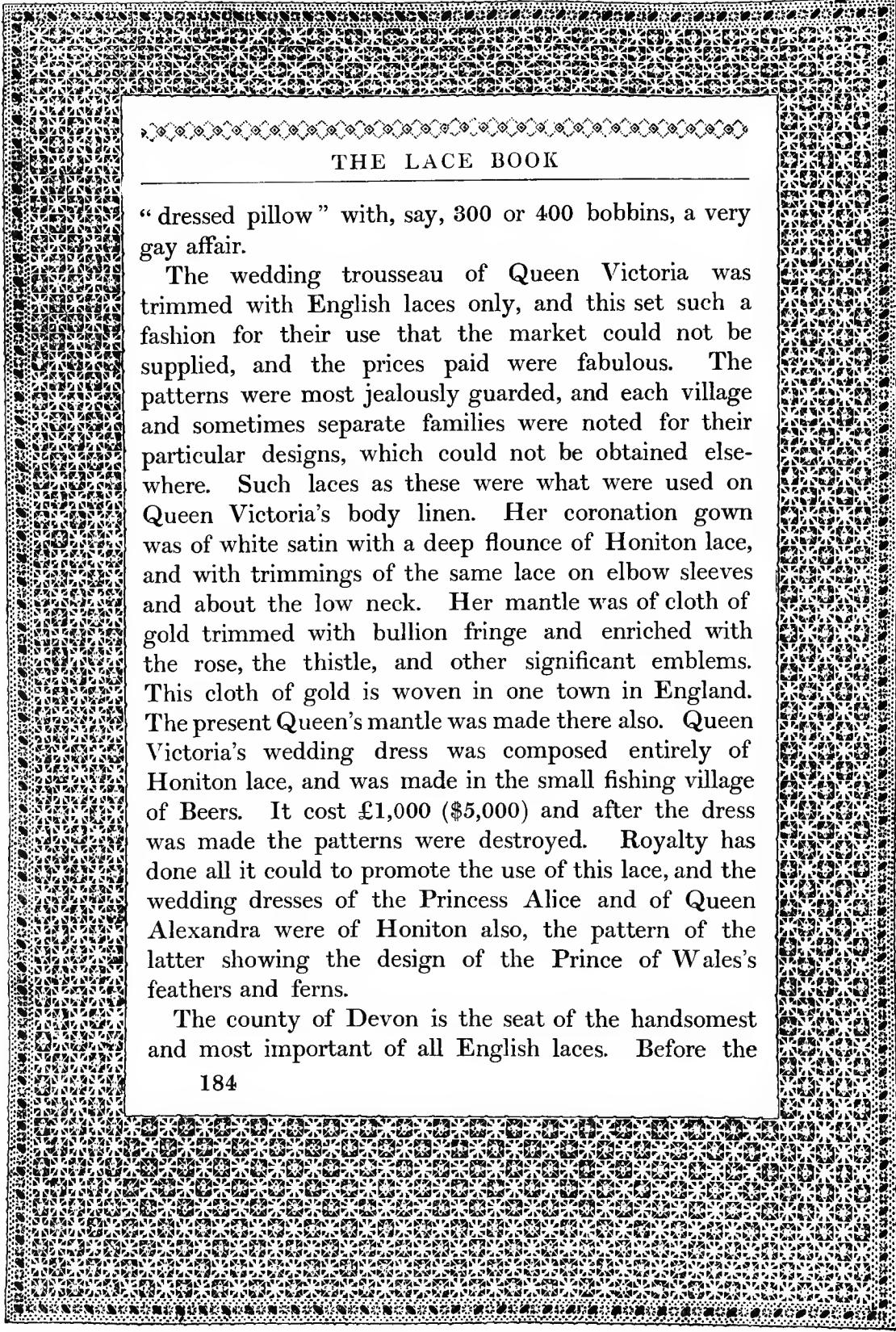


## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

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in England, it still remained in America, and a great quantity of these laces were exported till about the middle of the nineteenth century.

Not only are these laces charming in quality and pattern, but the reasonable price at which they were sold made them very desirable. Very choice designs could be bought at \$1 a yard, few coming higher than \$1.50. Many of these laces were made by children, chiefly girls, beginning with those only eight years old. They worked from 6 A. M. to 6 P. M. in summer, with two hours taken out for meals. In winter the hours were from 8 A. M. to 8 P. M., so it is not a wonder that lace-makers lose their sight early, since the insufficient light furnished must have rendered the work most trying. A candle-stand with one solitary candle was placed in the centre of the room. Around the candle in hollow wooden cups were set bottles of very thin glass filled with water. These concentrated the light, and there were three girls to each bottle, one candle being deemed sufficient for eighteen girls, seated on stools of varied heights. The pillows were exceeding hard and covered with blue butcher's linen. There were various cloths in addition for the lace to lie on, to cover the pillow with when not in use, and to keep the lace in as it was made. The pins were of very slender brass wire made on purpose for this work, some with larger heads than others. The bobbins, as in other lace-making countries, were generally of turned wood, made of the requisite weight by the addition of bright-coloured beads, which made a



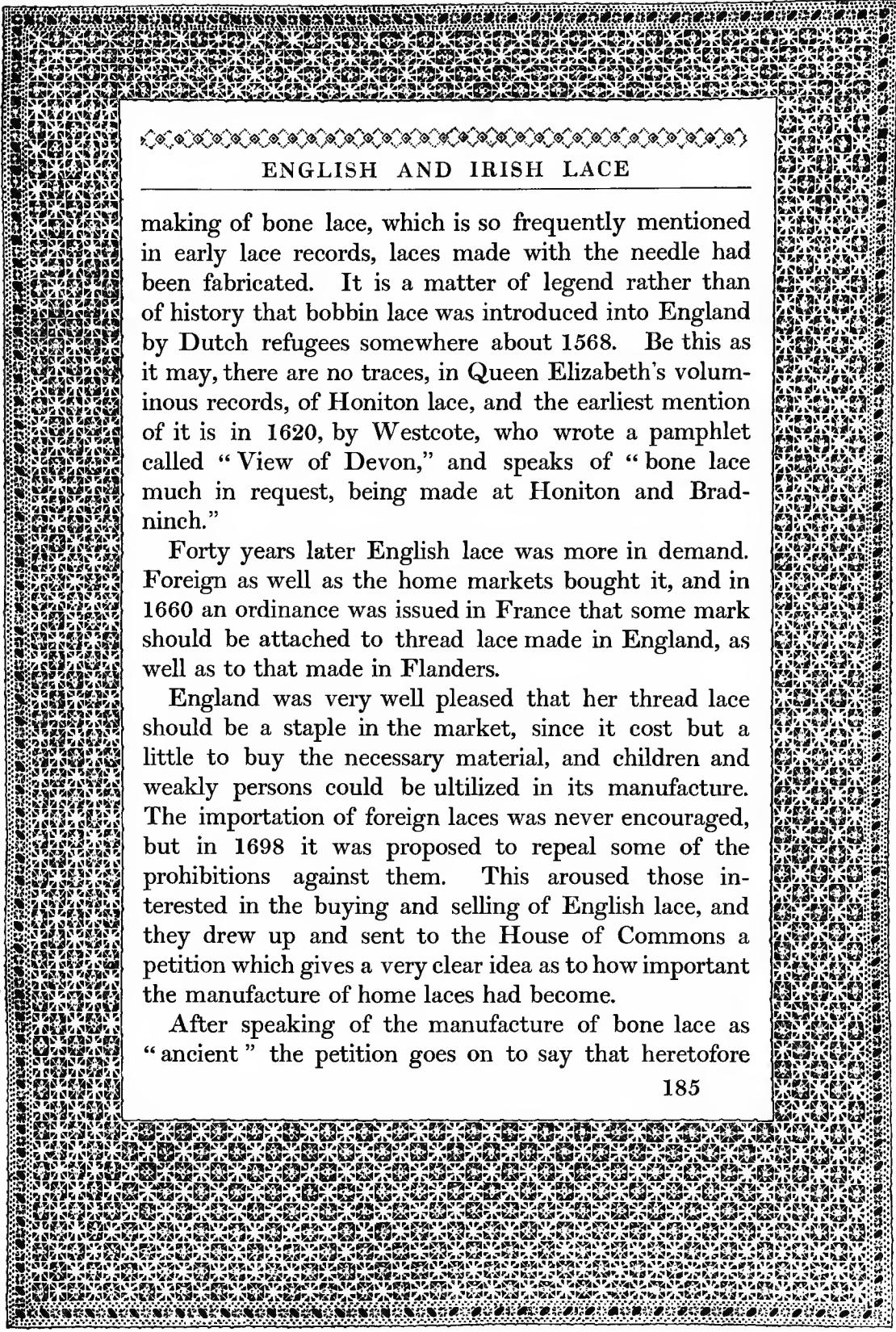
## THE LACE BOOK

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“dressed pillow” with, say, 300 or 400 bobbins, a very gay affair.

The wedding trousseau of Queen Victoria was trimmed with English laces only, and this set such a fashion for their use that the market could not be supplied, and the prices paid were fabulous. The patterns were most jealously guarded, and each village and sometimes separate families were noted for their particular designs, which could not be obtained elsewhere. Such laces as these were what were used on Queen Victoria's body linen. Her coronation gown was of white satin with a deep flounce of Honiton lace, and with trimmings of the same lace on elbow sleeves and about the low neck. Her mantle was of cloth of gold trimmed with bullion fringe and enriched with the rose, the thistle, and other significant emblems. This cloth of gold is woven in one town in England. The present Queen's mantle was made there also. Queen Victoria's wedding dress was composed entirely of Honiton lace, and was made in the small fishing village of Beers. It cost £1,000 (\$5,000) and after the dress was made the patterns were destroyed. Royalty has done all it could to promote the use of this lace, and the wedding dresses of the Princess Alice and of Queen Alexandra were of Honiton also, the pattern of the latter showing the design of the Prince of Wales's feathers and ferns.

The county of Devon is the seat of the handsomest and most important of all English laces. Before the



ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

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making of bone lace, which is so frequently mentioned in early lace records, laces made with the needle had been fabricated. It is a matter of legend rather than of history that bobbin lace was introduced into England by Dutch refugees somewhere about 1568. Be this as it may, there are no traces, in Queen Elizabeth's voluminous records, of Honiton lace, and the earliest mention of it is in 1620, by Westcote, who wrote a pamphlet called "View of Devon," and speaks of "bone lace much in request, being made at Honiton and Bradninch."

Forty years later English lace was more in demand. Foreign as well as the home markets bought it, and in 1660 an ordinance was issued in France that some mark should be attached to thread lace made in England, as well as to that made in Flanders.

England was very well pleased that her thread lace should be a staple in the market, since it cost but a little to buy the necessary material, and children and weakly persons could be utilized in its manufacture. The importation of foreign laces was never encouraged, but in 1698 it was proposed to repeal some of the prohibitions against them. This aroused those interested in the buying and selling of English lace, and they drew up and sent to the House of Commons a petition which gives a very clear idea as to how important the manufacture of home laces had become.

After speaking of the manufacture of bone lace as "ancient" the petition goes on to say that heretofore

## THE LACE BOOK

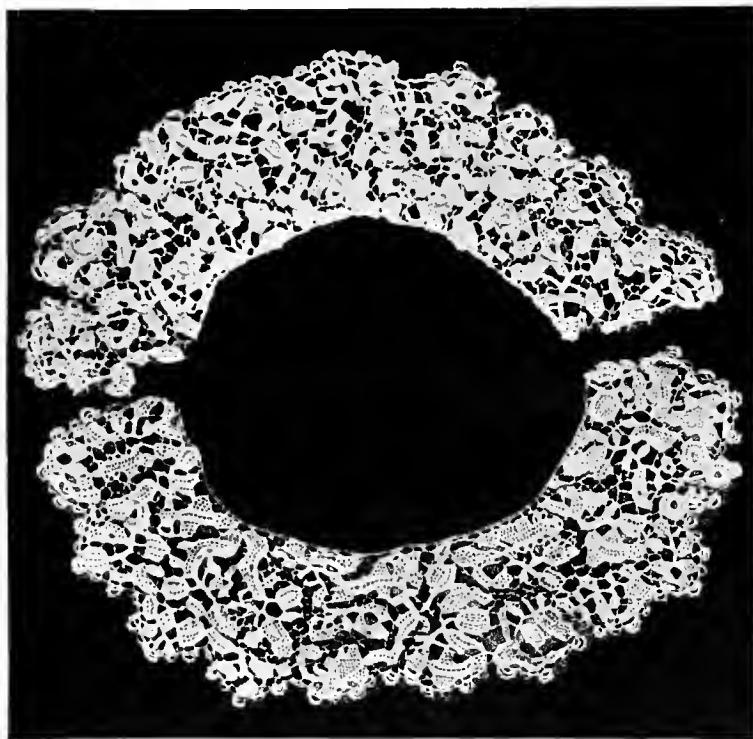
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Parliament had considered it wise to prohibit the importation of lace from foreign ports.

“This has revived the said Languishing Manufacture, and there are now above one hundred thousand in England who get their living by it, and earn by mere Labour £500,000 a year according to the lowest computation that can be made; and the Persons employed on it are for the most part, women and children who have no other means of Subsistence. The English are now arrived to make as good lace in Fineness and all other respects as any that is wrought in Flanders, and particularly since the last Act, so great an improvement is made that way that in Buckinghamshire, the highest prized lace they used to make was about eight shillings per yard, and now they make lace there of above thirty shillings per yard, and in Dorsetshire and Devonshire they now make lace worth six pound per yard.”

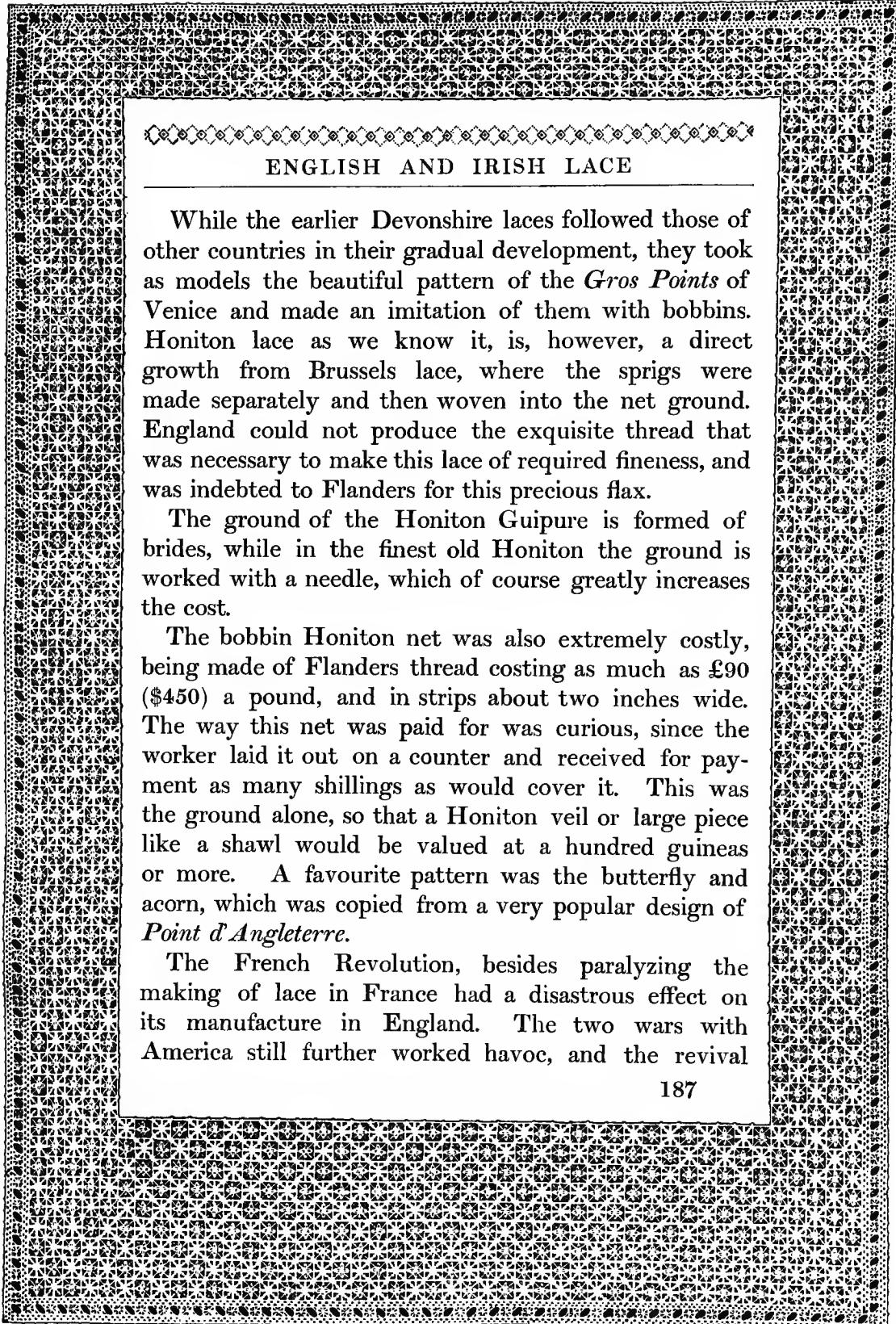
“The Lace Manufacture in England is the greatest, next to the woollen, and maintains a multitude of People which otherwise the Parishes must, and that would soon prove a heavy burthen, even to those concerned in the Woollen Manufacture. On the Resolution which shall be taken in this affair depends the Well-being, or ruin of numerous families in this Country.”

The number of people quoted as getting their living in Honiton by this industry was 1,341. The little town of Honiton was twice destroyed by fire, first in the year 1756, and again in 1767. The first of these two fires was the more disastrous, and was always known in the annals of the town as the “Great Fire.” Three years before this, in 1753, a Mrs. Lydia Maynard won a prize of fifteen guineas offered by the Anti-Gallican Society for the encouragement of lace-makers. She exhibited six pairs of ladies’ lappets, which were said to be of “unprecedented beauty.” The Honiton lace was also the widest lace made in England.



**P**LATE LVI.—Irish crochet lace. Nineteenth  
Century.





## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

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While the earlier Devonshire laces followed those of other countries in their gradual development, they took as models the beautiful pattern of the *Gros Points* of Venice and made an imitation of them with bobbins. Honiton lace as we know it, is, however, a direct growth from Brussels lace, where the sprigs were made separately and then woven into the net ground. England could not produce the exquisite thread that was necessary to make this lace of required fineness, and was indebted to Flanders for this precious flax.

The ground of the Honiton Guipure is formed of bobbins, while in the finest old Honiton the ground is worked with a needle, which of course greatly increases the cost.

The bobbin Honiton net was also extremely costly, being made of Flanders thread costing as much as £90 (\$450) a pound, and in strips about two inches wide. The way this net was paid for was curious, since the worker laid it out on a counter and received for payment as many shillings as would cover it. This was the ground alone, so that a Honiton veil or large piece like a shawl would be valued at a hundred guineas or more. A favourite pattern was the butterfly and acorn, which was copied from a very popular design of *Point d'Angleterre*.

The French Revolution, besides paralyzing the making of lace in France had a disastrous effect on its manufacture in England. The two wars with America still further worked havoc, and the revival

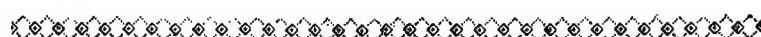
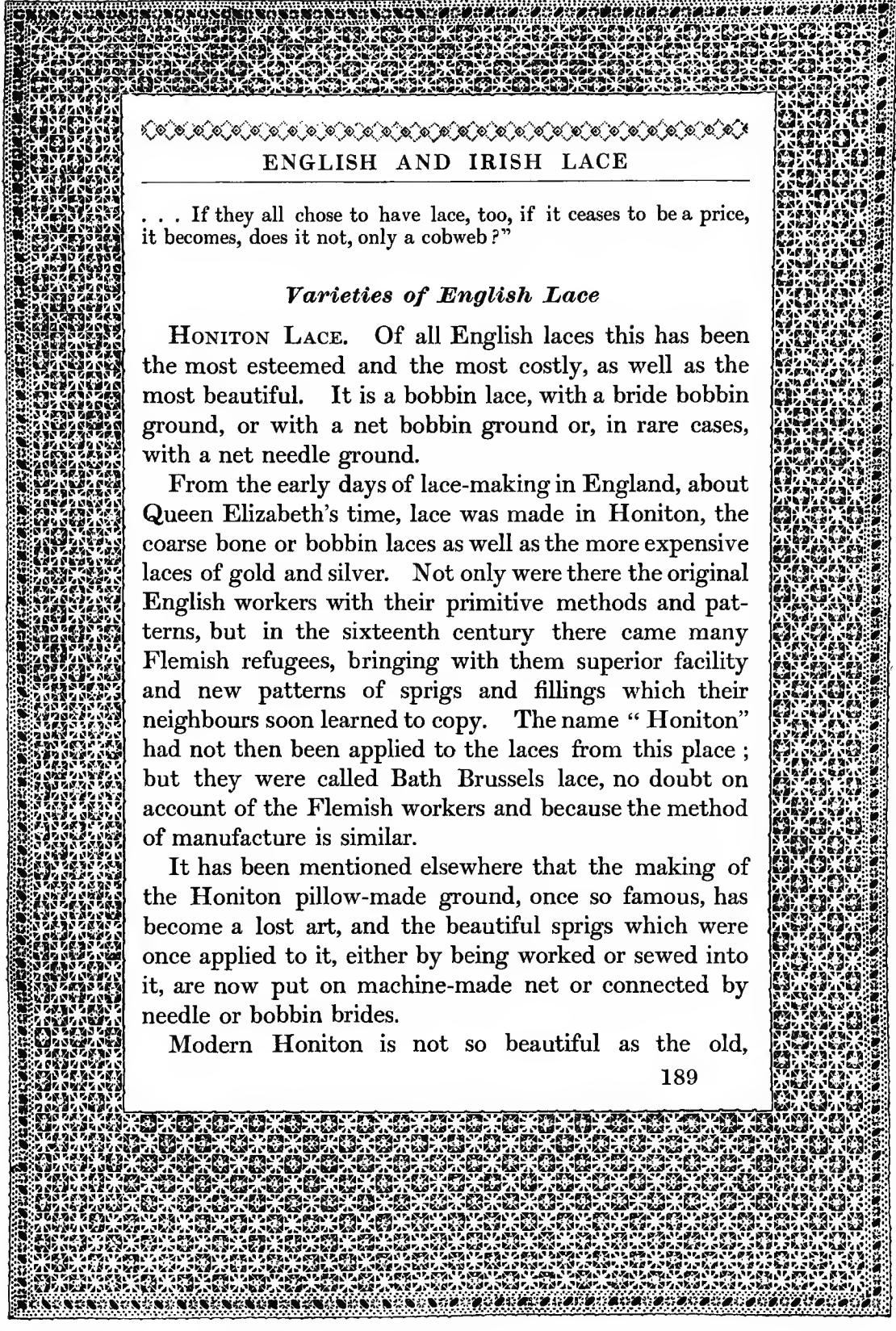
## THE LACE BOOK

of the classic style in dress was also against it. But the worst blow of all was the invention of machinery to make net, which dates from 1768. In the years 1808 and 1809 an Englishman named John Heathcoat, of Nottingham, obtained patents for machines to make bobbin net, which laid the foundation for the successful making of machine-made lace. A few years later (1813), John Leavers still further improved these machines, and his inventions are still in use.

Joseph Marie Jacquard, a Frenchman of Lyons, invented a marvellous machine for the weaving of silk, for which he finally obtained recognition, and before he died, in 1834, he had the satisfaction of seeing it in general use. Part of his apparatus applied to lace net machines has enabled manufacturers to weave all sorts of patterns in imitation of hand-made lace. Still further improvement by another Frenchman has resulted in an even more perfect machine, known as the *dentellièr*, the use of which is at present restricted, since the product of this machine is more costly than hand-made lace.

Every day the rich and elegant appreciate more clearly that lace, like gems, should be the "real thing," to be that ornament for which its beauty intended it. Ruskin says :

"The whole value of lace as a possession depends on the fact of its having a beauty which has been the reward of industry and attention. That the thing is itself a price—a thing everybody cannot have. That it proves, by the look of it, the ability of the maker; that it proves, by the rarity of it, the dignity of its wearer.



## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

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... If they all chose to have lace, too, if it ceases to be a price, it becomes, does it not, only a cobweb?"

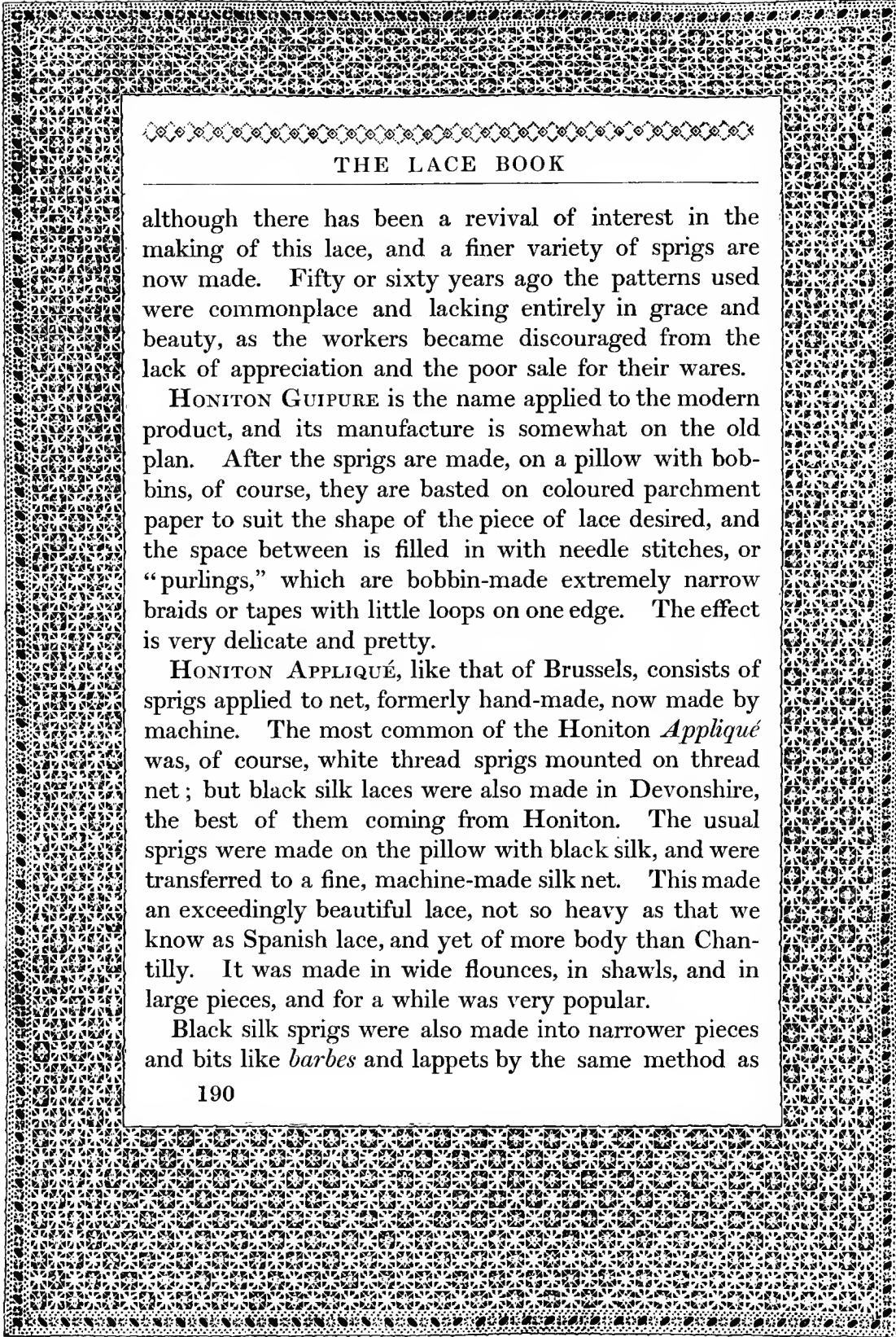
### *Varieties of English Lace*

**HONITON LACE.** Of all English laces this has been the most esteemed and the most costly, as well as the most beautiful. It is a bobbin lace, with a bride bobbin ground, or with a net bobbin ground or, in rare cases, with a net needle ground.

From the early days of lace-making in England, about Queen Elizabeth's time, lace was made in Honiton, the coarse bone or bobbin laces as well as the more expensive laces of gold and silver. Not only were there the original English workers with their primitive methods and patterns, but in the sixteenth century there came many Flemish refugees, bringing with them superior facility and new patterns of sprigs and fillings which their neighbours soon learned to copy. The name "Honiton" had not then been applied to the laces from this place ; but they were called Bath Brussels lace, no doubt on account of the Flemish workers and because the method of manufacture is similar.

It has been mentioned elsewhere that the making of the Honiton pillow-made ground, once so famous, has become a lost art, and the beautiful sprigs which were once applied to it, either by being worked or sewed into it, are now put on machine-made net or connected by needle or bobbin brides.

Modern Honiton is not so beautiful as the old,



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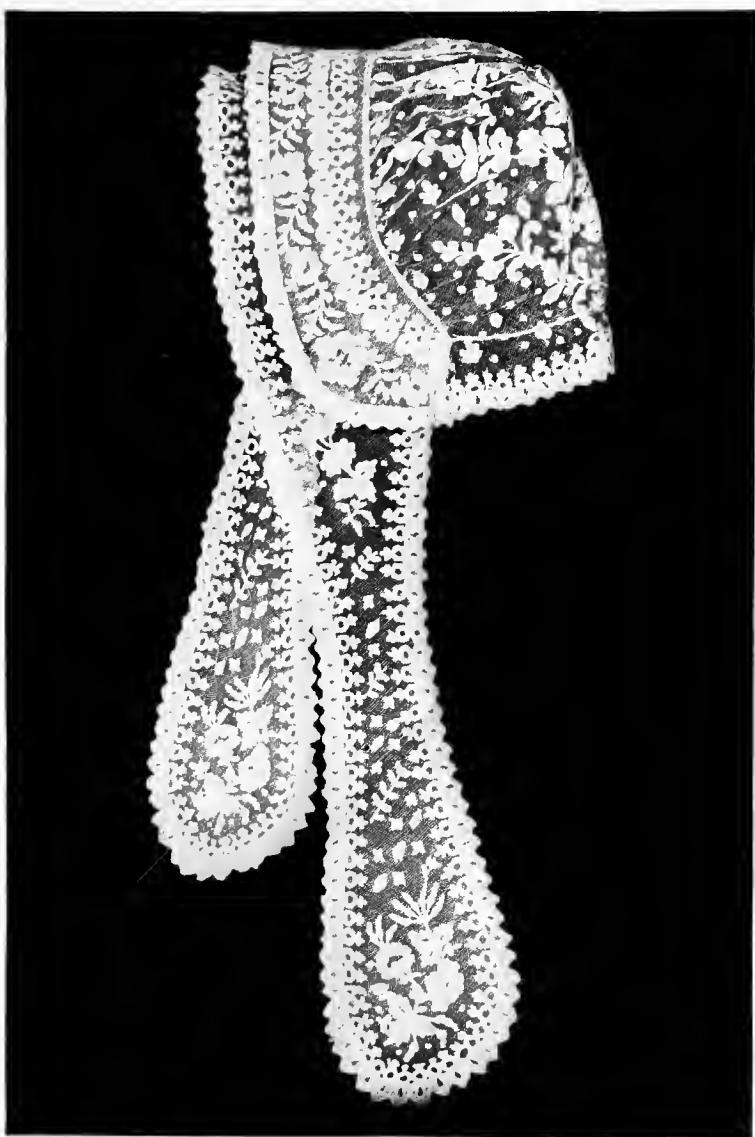
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although there has been a revival of interest in the making of this lace, and a finer variety of sprigs are now made. Fifty or sixty years ago the patterns used were commonplace and lacking entirely in grace and beauty, as the workers became discouraged from the lack of appreciation and the poor sale for their wares.

HONITON GUIPURE is the name applied to the modern product, and its manufacture is somewhat on the old plan. After the sprigs are made, on a pillow with bobbins, of course, they are basted on coloured parchment paper to suit the shape of the piece of lace desired, and the space between is filled in with needle stitches, or "purlings," which are bobbin-made extremely narrow braids or tapes with little loops on one edge. The effect is very delicate and pretty.

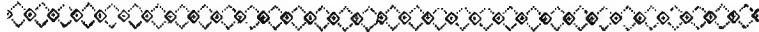
HONITON APPLIQUÉ, like that of Brussels, consists of sprigs applied to net, formerly hand-made, now made by machine. The most common of the Honiton *Appliqué* was, of course, white thread sprigs mounted on thread net; but black silk laces were also made in Devonshire, the best of them coming from Honiton. The usual sprigs were made on the pillow with black silk, and were transferred to a fine, machine-made silk net. This made an exceedingly beautiful lace, not so heavy as that we know as Spanish lace, and yet of more body than Chantilly. It was made in wide flounces, in shawls, and in large pieces, and for a while was very popular.

Black silk sprigs were also made into narrower pieces and bits like *barbes* and lappets by the same method as



**P**LATE LVII.—*Limerick Appliqué lace. Lawn, on machine-made net (1840).*





## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

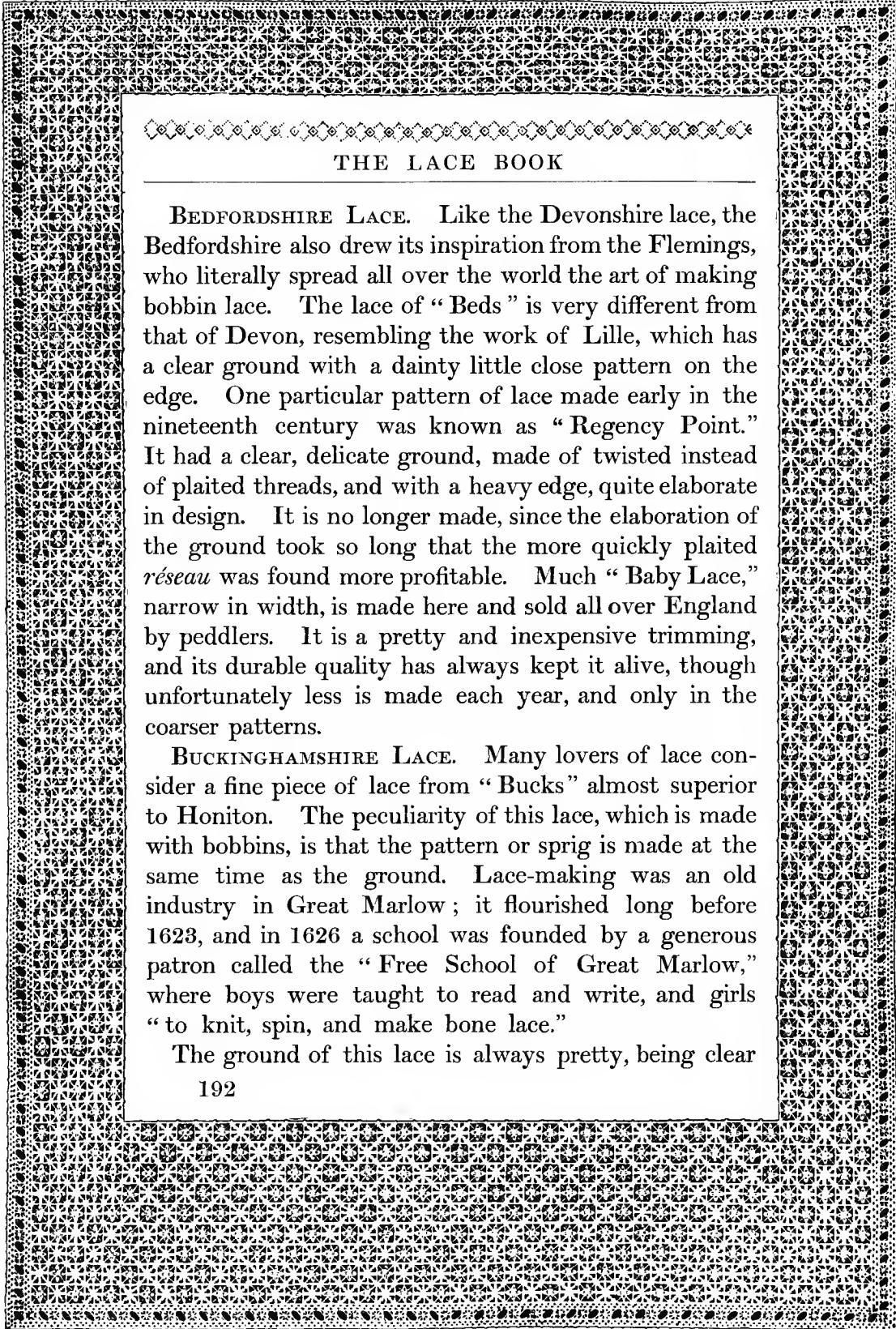
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the white thread sprigs ; that is, they were sewed on paper, and brides or bars were used to fill in the spaces around them and connect the sprigs. No black silk laces have been made in Honiton for the last quarter of a century, the workers that are left confining themselves to the making of the white thread laces.

**DEVONSHIRE LACES.** Next to Honiton, Trolley lace was the best known of all the laces made in Devonshire. None of the lace made here seems to have been an original growth, except Honiton, since the Trolley lace was copied from Flemish lace of the same name, and *Point d'Angleterre*, as a certain variety of Brussels lace was called, was also successfully copied in Devon. In this, as in the Honiton, the sprigs were made first, and the bobbin-net ground worked in around them. By the middle of the eighteenth century the Devonshire workers could rival their Flemish instructors, and present as beautiful specimens of this lace, with as great variety in fillings of fancy stitchings, as if it had been made by nimble Flemish fingers in Brussels itself.

Beside these expensive laces, quantities of narrow and coarser laces were made in Devon also, something in character like the modern Torchon.

The Trolley lace is distinguished by having a heavier looking thread in various parts of the pattern. This is always made by twisting the threads of the bobbins together, never by the introduction of a coarser thread. The making of this lace has seriously declined, cheap machine laces taking its place.



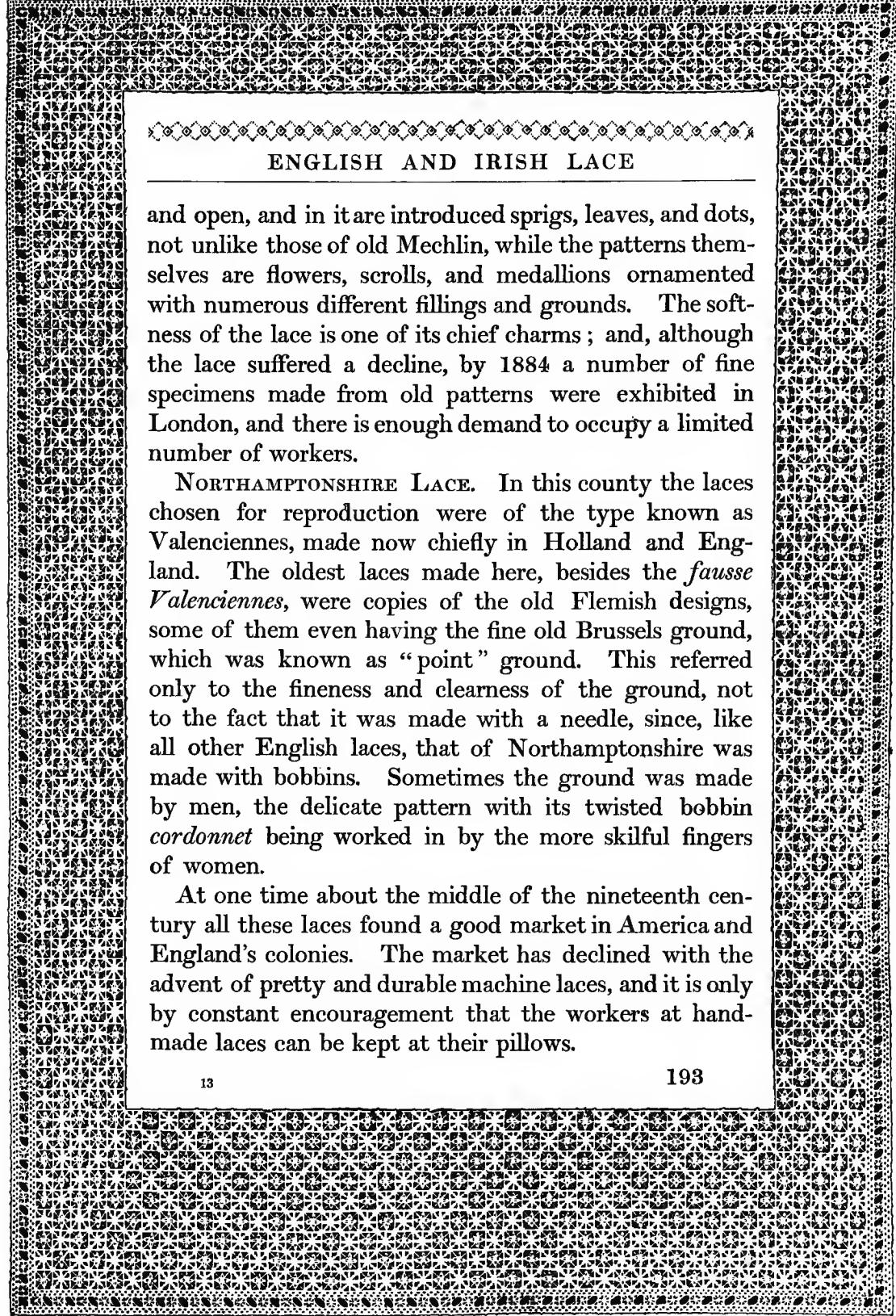
## THE LACE BOOK

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**BEDFORDSHIRE LACE.** Like the Devonshire lace, the Bedfordshire also drew its inspiration from the Flemings, who literally spread all over the world the art of making bobbin lace. The lace of "Beds" is very different from that of Devon, resembling the work of Lille, which has a clear ground with a dainty little close pattern on the edge. One particular pattern of lace made early in the nineteenth century was known as "Regency Point." It had a clear, delicate ground, made of twisted instead of plaited threads, and with a heavy edge, quite elaborate in design. It is no longer made, since the elaboration of the ground took so long that the more quickly plaited *r  seau* was found more profitable. Much "Baby Lace," narrow in width, is made here and sold all over England by peddlers. It is a pretty and inexpensive trimming, and its durable quality has always kept it alive, though unfortunately less is made each year, and only in the coarser patterns.

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LACE.** Many lovers of lace consider a fine piece of lace from "Bucks" almost superior to Honiton. The peculiarity of this lace, which is made with bobbins, is that the pattern or sprig is made at the same time as the ground. Lace-making was an old industry in Great Marlow; it flourished long before 1623, and in 1626 a school was founded by a generous patron called the "Free School of Great Marlow," where boys were taught to read and write, and girls "to knit, spin, and make bone lace."

The ground of this lace is always pretty, being clear



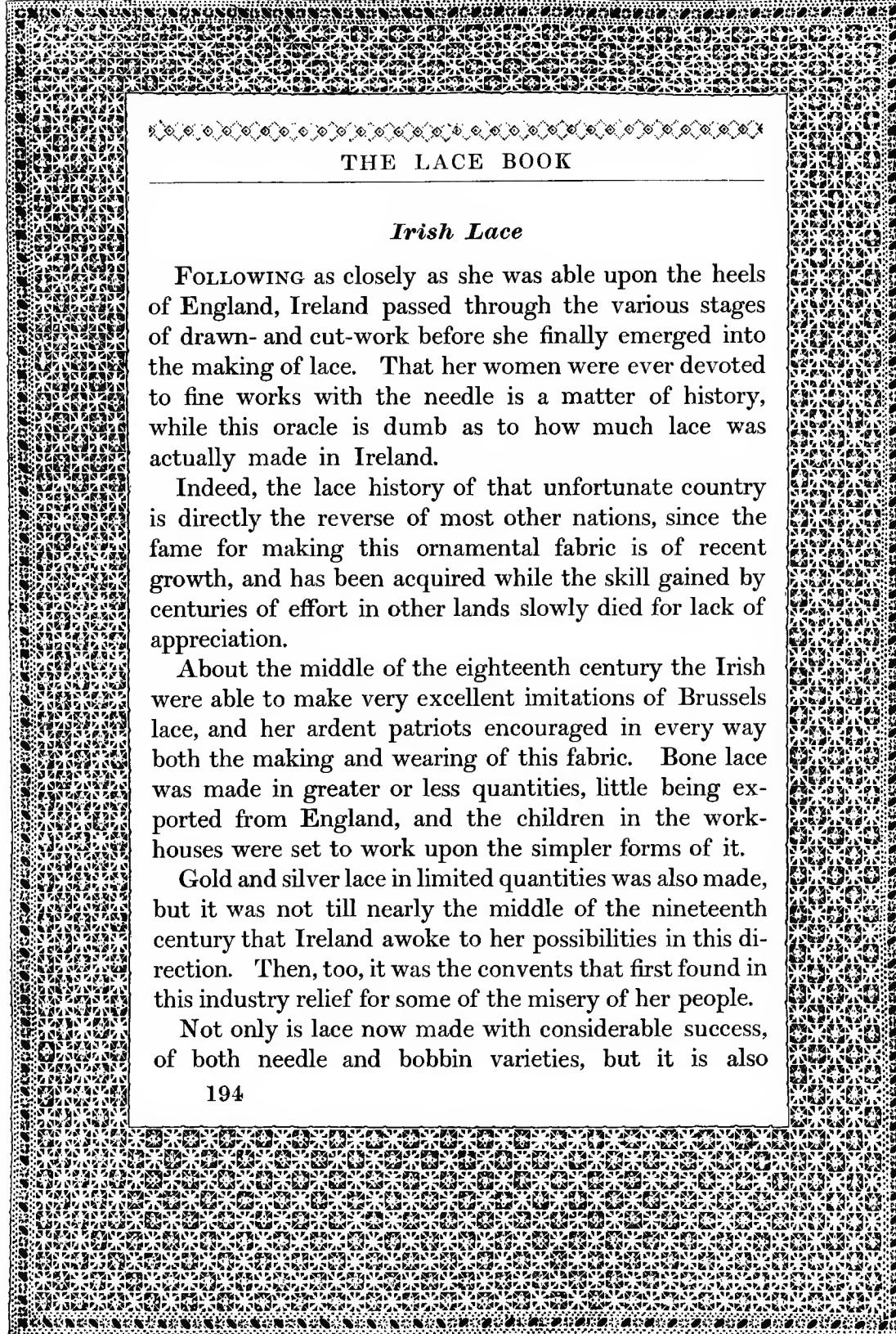
## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

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and open, and in it are introduced sprigs, leaves, and dots, not unlike those of old Mechlin, while the patterns themselves are flowers, scrolls, and medallions ornamented with numerous different fillings and grounds. The softness of the lace is one of its chief charms ; and, although the lace suffered a decline, by 1884 a number of fine specimens made from old patterns were exhibited in London, and there is enough demand to occupy a limited number of workers.

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE LACE.** In this county the laces chosen for reproduction were of the type known as Valenciennes, made now chiefly in Holland and England. The oldest laces made here, besides the *fausse Valenciennes*, were copies of the old Flemish designs, some of them even having the fine old Brussels ground, which was known as "point" ground. This referred only to the fineness and clearness of the ground, not to the fact that it was made with a needle, since, like all other English laces, that of Northamptonshire was made with bobbins. Sometimes the ground was made by men, the delicate pattern with its twisted bobbin *cordonnet* being worked in by the more skilful fingers of women.

At one time about the middle of the nineteenth century all these laces found a good market in America and England's colonies. The market has declined with the advent of pretty and durable machine laces, and it is only by constant encouragement that the workers at hand-made laces can be kept at their pillows.



## THE LACE BOOK

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### *Irish Lace*

FOLLOWING as closely as she was able upon the heels of England, Ireland passed through the various stages of drawn- and cut-work before she finally emerged into the making of lace. That her women were ever devoted to fine works with the needle is a matter of history, while this oracle is dumb as to how much lace was actually made in Ireland.

Indeed, the lace history of that unfortunate country is directly the reverse of most other nations, since the fame for making this ornamental fabric is of recent growth, and has been acquired while the skill gained by centuries of effort in other lands slowly died for lack of appreciation.

About the middle of the eighteenth century the Irish were able to make very excellent imitations of Brussels lace, and her ardent patriots encouraged in every way both the making and wearing of this fabric. Bone lace was made in greater or less quantities, little being exported from England, and the children in the work-houses were set to work upon the simpler forms of it.

Gold and silver lace in limited quantities was also made, but it was not till nearly the middle of the nineteenth century that Ireland awoke to her possibilities in this direction. Then, too, it was the convents that first found in this industry relief for some of the misery of her people.

Not only is lace now made with considerable success, of both needle and bobbin varieties, but it is also

## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

crocheted in beautiful patterns with thread of either cream-colour or white, showing knotted as well as raised Guipure, in Greek and Spanish patterns.

Drawn- and cut-work are also made in different countries, and at the beginning of the twentieth century Ireland is successfully making seven kinds of lace, namely: crochet, flat needle point, raised needle point, embroidery on net, cut-work, drawn-work in old Italian style, and bobbin laces.

Unfortunately some of the choicest of these laces lose in effect from the poor quality of the thread used, since it is almost impossible to get it of pure flax, and an admixture of cotton makes it work up thick and fluffy. Flax is grown in Ireland in considerable quantity, and the spinning of the thread has long been a matter of machinery, so that with encouragement we may expect to see Ireland assume a place in this industry which she never held in earlier times, while richer countries lose their dearly bought pre-eminence. The choicest lace is that made at Youghal, and half a dozen other places, in imitation of Brussels lace. It is called —

**IRISH POINT.** This lace is made entirely with the needle in many cases, the different sprigs being united by needle-point bars. Sometimes the sprigs are mounted upon machine-made net, being carefully sewed to it so that the net can be cut away behind the pattern, giving a light and delicate appearance. In Kenmare, County Kerry, much of this lace is made at the Convent of the Poor Clares, and it is somewhat superior in quality to

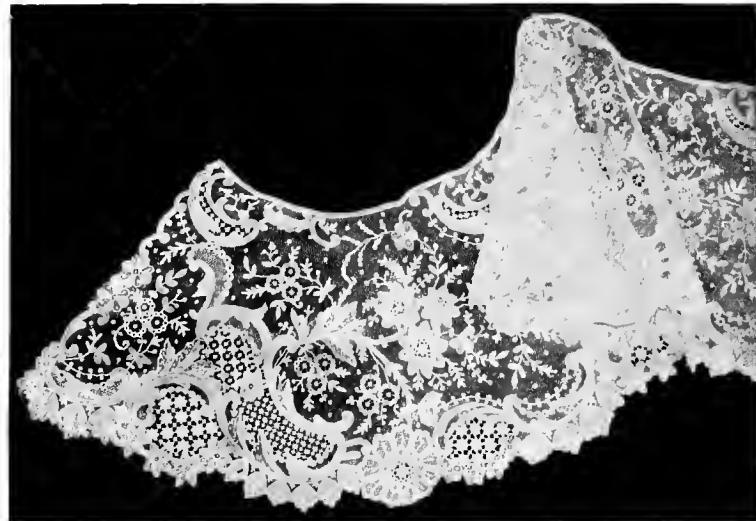
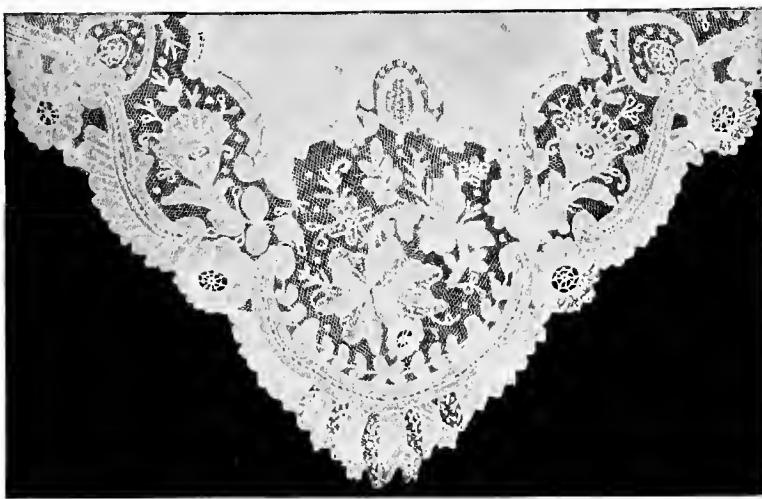
## THE LACE BOOK

that made at Youghal, since great care is taken to have the thread entirely flax. The Guipure from this county is particularly fine.

An imitation of the old Venetian Point is made very successfully at New Ross, the heavy old Rose-Point patterns being copied with the greatest care. Indeed, some of these designs are reproduced in a marvellous manner with the crochet-needle, the nuns of the Carmelite Convent at New Ross being very proficient.

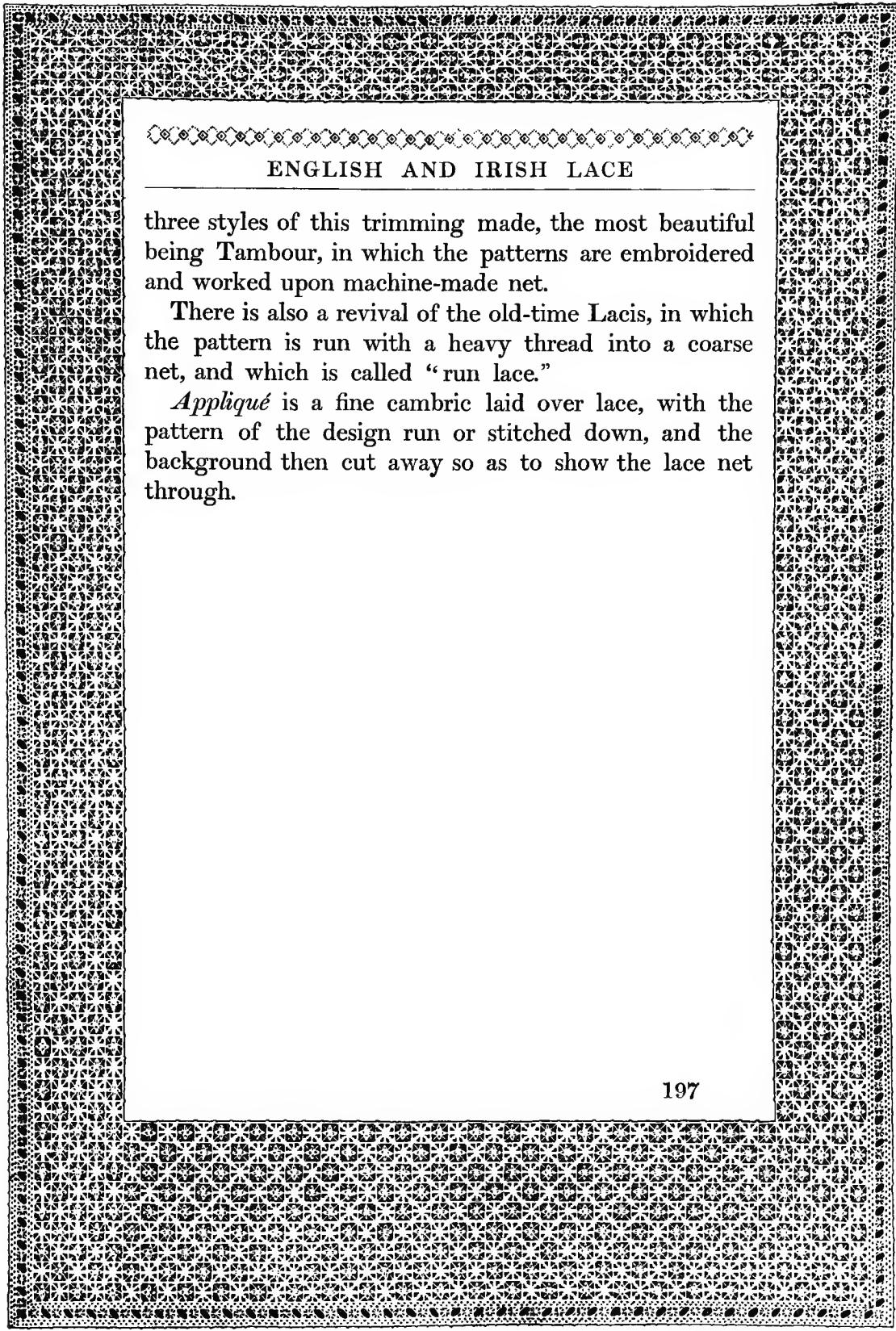
CARRICKMACROSS LACE is also an adaptation from another country, and is made in both Guipure and applied patterns. The Guipure is almost cut-work upon fine lawn, in which the pattern is traced and worked around or closely overcast, the intermediate bits of cloth cut away, and the spaces filled in with various fancy stitches. This work has not the solidity of the old cut-work made on coarse linen with heavy threads or silk. To compete with the machine-made trimmings, it must be sold at not too great a price, and so too much time cannot be spent upon it. The *Appliquéd* is made on net, as previously described.

LIMERICK LACE is a combination, too, of cut-work and embroidery, and hardly comes under our definition of lace. Since 1829 this work has been made, though it has suffered at various times from loss of workers by emigration and other causes. As Lady Vere and Lady Arabella Denny were patron saints to the lace-workers of other counties, Charles Walker was the good genius who brought Limerick lace to perfection. There are



**PLATE LVIII.—***A. Point de Gaze. Modern Brussels needle point. Nineteenth Century.*  
*B. Point d'Alençon. Nineteenth Century. Made in Venice.*





## ENGLISH AND IRISH LACE

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three styles of this trimming made, the most beautiful being Tambour, in which the patterns are embroidered and worked upon machine-made net.

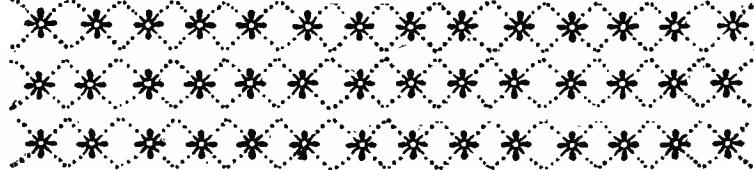
There is also a revival of the old-time Lacis, in which the pattern is run with a heavy thread into a coarse net, and which is called "run lace."

*Appliquéd* is a fine cambric laid over lace, with the pattern of the design run or stitched down, and the background then cut away so as to show the lace net through.



*Index*





## Index

ALENCON, 7, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 76, 83, 97, 123, 124, 127, 128, 134, 135, 140, 141, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150.  
Aloc lace, 84.  
Amboise, 74.  
Anne of Austria, 92.  
Anne, Queen, 19, 24, 25, 173.  
Antwerp lace, 109.  
Appliquéd, 196, 197.  
Aprons, 173.  
Argentan, 7, 35, 36, 83, 127, 128, 129, 130, 134, 148, 149, 150.  
Argentella, 83.  
"BABY LACES," 182, 183, 192.  
"Band strings," 21.  
"Bars," 60.  
Bath Brussels lace, 189.  
"Bath sets," 35.  
Beaufort, Duchess of, 30.  
Bedfordshire lace, 191, 192.  
Beggar's lace, 158.  
*Béguinages*, 104.  
Belgium, 94, 99.  
Berkeley, Bishop, 102.  
Binche lace, 108.  
*Bisette*, 141.  
*Blonde*, 109, 138, 140, 154, 155, 156.  
*Blonde tulle*, 37.  
Bobbins, 14, 98, 99, 183, 193.  
Bobbin lace, 14, 15, 102, 180, 181, 182, 185, 188, 195.  
Bone lace, 14, 19, 23, 170, 176, 182, 185, 192, 194.  
Bonzy, Mgr de, 122.  
"Boot tops," 23.  
Borgia, Lucretia, 73.  
Boston Museum of Fine Arts, 148.  
Botticelli, 63.  
Brantôme, 74.  
"Brides," 60.  
Bruges, 100.  
Brussels lace, 25, 38, 39, 95, 96, 97, 124, 135, 175, 187, 194.  
Buckingham, Duke of, 19, 20.  
Buckinghamshire lace, 182, 192, 193.  
Burano, 7, 8, 127.  
  
CAMORA, 73.  
*Campane*, 157, 158.  
Cannons, 32.  
Canterbury, Archbishop of, 27.  
Carignan, Francis, 75.  
Carnival lace, 83.  
Caroline, Queen, 26.  
Carr, Sir John, 104.  
Carrickmacross lace, 196.  
Chain-stitch, 170.  
Chandos, Duke and Duchess, 27.  
Chantilly lace, 38, 134, 135, 139, 140, 148, 154, 155, 163.

## THE LACE BOOK

Charles II, 107, 175, 176, 178.  
Charles V, 90.  
Charles, Prince, 19, 21, 22, 23.  
Charlotte, Queen, 27.  
Chesterfield, Lady, 28.  
China, 87.  
Christie's, 77, 78, 107, 108, 147, 148.  
Church of Rome, 6, 7, 8, 9.  
*Cinq-Mars*, 30.  
Clement XIII, 8.  
Cloaks, 19, 25.  
Clouet, J., 74, 117.  
Cluny lace, 136, 151.  
Colbert, 32, 33, 117, 122, 123, 125, 127, 128, 134, 135, 142, 152, 156, 159.  
Colberteen, 156, 157, 182.  
Commode, 182.  
*Cordonnet*, 61, 146, 193.  
*Couronnes*, 61.  
"Courriers de la Mode," 35.  
*Courtot, Baroness de*, 40.  
Coventry blue, 10.  
Cravats, 23, 24, 175.  
Crochet, 195.  
"Crown lace," 14.  
"Crowns," 61.  
Cromwell, 23.  
Cuffs, 126.  
"Curiosities of Literature," 20.  
Cut-work, 23, 59, 69, 195.

*D'Abmantès, Duchesse*, 112.  
*Dentelle*, 5, 157, 168.  
*Dentellièrè*, 188.  
*Dentelle Fuseau*, 157.  
*Dentelle de Fil*, 157.  
Devonshire lace, 187, 191.  
Dieppe Point, 157.  
D'Israeli, 20.

Drake, Sir Wm., 78, 148.  
Drawn-work, 58, 194, 195.  
*Du Barry, Mdme*, 36, 96, 135, 153.  
Ducat, 73.  
Duchesse lace, 113.  
Dutch, 5.

**ECCLESIASTICAL GARMENTS**, 6, 7, 8, 9.  
Edict of Nantes, Revocation of, 100, 142.  
Edward IV, 12.  
Elizabethean ruff, 170.  
Elizabeth, Queen, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 91, 162.  
*Encaje*, 5.  
*Engagéants*, 126.  
England, 9, 10, 12, 18, 21, 26, 28, 35, 60, 90, 95, 96.  
English and Irish lace, 167-197.  
"English thread," 167.  
*Engrélure*, 130.  
*Eugénie, Empress*, 140, 147.  
*d'Este, Beatrice*, 65, 73.  
*d'Este, Isabella*, 35.  
*d'Estrées, Gabrielle*, 116, 120.  
"Extraordinary expenses," 19.

"FALLING BANDS," 20, 21, 22.  
Ferrara, 73.  
Flanders, 5, 9, 15, 23, 24, 25, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 60, 81, 89, 91, 93, 97, 98, 103, 160, 162, 175, 176, 182.  
Flanders' Point, 105.  
Flat needle point, 195.  
Flax, 88.  
Flemish lace, 87-113.  
*Fleur volantes*, 61.  
Florence, 63, 65, 67, 74.  
Flounces, 130.  
Felix, O., 68.

## INDEX

“*Fontange*,” 126, 127, 132.  
France, 5, 9, 17, 28, 32, 33, 35, 38, 60, 68, 69, 70, 74, 75, 82, 93, 100, 103, 117, 122, 162.  
Francis II, 74.  
French laces, 117-158.  
*Frescobaldi, Messer*, 169.  
**GALANTS**, 121.  
George III, 26, 27, 28.  
Geneva bands, 22.  
Genoa, 5, 32, 63, 74, 129.  
Genoa lace, 82.  
Germany, 60.  
Ghent, 100.  
Ghirlandajo, 63.  
*Gilbert, Mdme*, 32, 122, 145.  
*Glen, Jean de*, 89.  
Gold lace, 12, 17, 18, 24, 25, 31, 32, 62, 63, 64, 65, 72, 74, 136, 142, 150, 151, 162, 163, 194.  
Gorgias, 117.  
Gothic period, 6.  
Great Marlow, 192.  
Greece, 60, 83.  
Greek lace, 59, 60.  
*Gros Point de Venise*, 9, 61, 75, 145, 160, 161, 187.  
*Guyard, Mathieu*, 128, 129.  
*Guicciardini*, 90.  
*Guipure*, 5, 12, 17, 27, 62, 63, 80, 81, 95, 99, 111, 113, 136, 137, 195, 196.  
*Guise, Duc de*, 119.  
*Haye, de la*, 68.  
Heathcoat, John, 188.  
Hebrew ceremonial, 9.  
Henry III, 28, 29, 68.  
Henry VI, 168.  
Henry VII, 12.  
Henry VIII, 10, 11, 12, 16, 22, 98, 170.  
Hercules I, 64.  
“History of Lace,” 13, 36.  
Holland, 13, 24, 90.  
“Hollands,” 16, 27, 91, 92.  
“Hollow lace,” 14.  
Honiton, 185, 186.  
Honiton appliquéd, 190.  
Honiton guipure, 187, 190.  
Honiton lace, 184, 186, 187, 189-191, 192.  
Honiton net, 187.  
Howell, James, 19, 20.  
**INVENTORY**, 18, 56.  
Ionian Isles, 60.  
Irish lace, 194-197.  
Irish Point, 195.  
Italy, 5, 28, 31, 32, 35, 60, 63, 68, 72, 75, 84, 87, 92, 117.  
Italian lace, 57, 75, 123, 130.  
*Jabot*, 175.  
*Jacquard, J. M.*, 188.  
James I, 18, 21, 23.  
James II, 24.  
Jonson, Ben, 21.  
Josephine, Empress, 38, 39, 40.  
“*Jours*,” 132, 133, 147.  
*Jupiter Capitolinus*, 7.  
**KANTEN**, 5.  
*Königsmarck, Aurora von*, 27.  
**LACE-MAKING (English)**, 167.  
Lace-making (Modern), 143.  
*Lacier*, 5.  
Lacis, 61, 69, 80, 118, 119, 197.  
Leavers, J., 188.  
Leicester, Earl of, 10.  
Leyden, 104.  
Lille lace, 111.

## THE LACE BOOK

Limerick lace, 196.  
London, 13, 15.  
Lonrai, 32.  
*Louis XIII*, 30, 120, 122.  
*Louis XIV*, 5, 33, 81, 94, 123, 126, 127, 130, 132, 133, 134, 139, 141, 144, 145, 146.  
*Louis XV*, 35, 36, 109, 127, 132, 133, 134, 136, 137, 146.  
*Louis XVI*, 9, 138.  
*Louvre*, 28.  
Lucca, 15, 63.  
*Lyunes, Due de*, 27, 134.

MACHINNE-MADE GROUNDS, 97.  
Machine-made lace, 144, 188.  
*Macramé*, 61.  
*Maintenon, Mdme de*, 126.  
Mantua, 35, 65.  
*Marie Antoinette*, 37, 92, 138, 139, 140.  
*Marie Louise*, 39.  
Mary, Queen, 12, 93.  
Mary Stuart, 4, 17, 18, 74.  
*Margherita, Queen*, 8.  
*Marli*, 37, 138, 139.  
*Mazarin*, 94, 122.  
Mechlin, 7, 25, 27, 39, 92, 93, 108, 109, 134.  
*Medici, Catherine de*, 28, 74, 117, 118.  
*Medici, Marie de*, 30, 31, 32, 82.  
*Meiningen, Duc de*, 40.  
*Merletto*, 5.  
*Mignonette*, 141, 156.  
Milan, 63, 65, 74.  
Milan Point, 79.  
*Mocenigo, Doge*, 72.  
*Mocenigo, Dogaressa*, 72.  
" Modes," 6.  
*Montespan, Mdme de*, 125.  
Montgomery, Gov., 102.

*Montpensier, Mdle*, 121.  
Morgan, Lady, 26.  
*Morosini, Doge*, 71.  
*Napoleon I*, 38, 39, 40, 140.  
*Navarre, Queen of*, 29.  
Neck-cloth, 175.  
Needle point, 102.  
Netherlands, 25, 87.  
Night-caps, 22, 23.  
*Nicholas, Etienne*, 129.  
*Nimequen*, 100.  
Northamptonshire lace, 182, 193.

*Oberkirch, Mdme*, 9.  
Oppian Law, 64.  
*Ostaus, John*, 69.

*Pagani*, 69.  
" Palatines," 125.  
Palliser, Mrs. Bury, 13, 14, 36, 95, 140, 168.  
Parchment lace, 14, 62.  
Paris, 26, 34, 39, 121.  
*Passement*, 5, 168, 176.  
*Passementerie*, 63.  
Paston letters, 4.  
Pattern-books, 68, 69, 70.  
Peerlen, 5.  
*Penthievre, Duc de*, 35, 144.  
Pepys' Diary, 24, 177, 178.  
*Permon, Mdle*, 39.  
Percy's Reliques, 11.  
Perquisites, 133, 134.  
*Petit Trianon*, 37.  
Pharaohs, 3.  
Philip the Good, 92.  
*Picot*, 59, 132, 145.  
Pillows, 98.  
Pins, 98.  
Pius IX, 7.

## INDEX

*Pizzo*, 5.  
*Point à bride*, 35.  
*Point à réseau*, 35, 62, 77, 78.  
*Point d'Aiguille*, 95, 97, 106.  
*Point d'Angleterre*, 27, 35, 36, 39, 76, 93, 95, 96, 97, 106, 107, 124, 125, 134, 135, 187, 191.  
*Point d'Espagne*, 131, 142, 159, 160.  
*Point de France*, 33, 124, 125, 127, 130, 131, 132, 144.  
*Point de Paris*, 142.  
*Point de Sedan*, 145.  
*Point de Venise*, 33, 34, 68, 127, 129, 148.  
*Point Gaze*, 106.  
"Point" ground, 193.  
Point lace, 76.  
*Point Plat*, 106.  
Points (Metal), 4.  
Portugal, 160.  
Potter Kant, 110.  
Prince Imperial, 141.  
*Punto a Groppo*, 61, 80.  
*Punto a Maglia*, 80.  
*Punto Burano*, 76.  
*Punto de Ragusa*, 83.  
*Punto Gotico*, 74, 75, 76, 103.  
*Punto in Aria*, 60, 67, 68.  
*Punto Tagliato*, 58.  
*Punto Tagliato a Fogliami*, 60, 71, 75, 76.  
*Punto Tirato*, 59.  
Purls, 59.  
"Purlings," 190.  
  
QUARTERLY REVIEW, 57.  
*Querouaille, Louise de*, 33.  
Quintain, 58.  
  
REFORMATION, 9.  
Regency Point, 192.  
  
Renaissance, 32, 34, 59, 65, 72, 79.  
*Renda*, 5.  
*Reticella*, 59, 60, 68, 71, 74, 83.  
*Retondes*, 117.  
Revolution, French, 38, 129, 139, 146, 149, 187.  
*Richelieu*, 32.  
*Rochet*, 9.  
*Rohan*, 9.  
Rome, 64, 73.  
Rome, King of, 39.  
Roundheads, 22.  
*Rousseau*, 139.  
Ruffs, 18, 20, 29, 103, 119.  
Ruffles, 126, 130.  
  
"SAM CLOTHS," 178.  
Samplers, 178, 179, 180.  
Savoy, Margaret of, 119.  
Scotland, 17.  
*Séguin*, 90.  
*Sévigné, Mdme de*, 125, 131.  
*Sforza*, 56, 73, 89.  
Spain, 19, 60, 93, 149, 160.  
Spaniards, 20.  
Spanish costume, 161.  
Spanish lace, 14, 159-163.  
Spanish stitch, 170.  
Spider-work, 152.  
Starch, 91.  
Steenwych, Mdme, 101.  
"Steinkirk," 131, 132.  
Stuart, Arahella, 172.  
Stuarts, 23.  
Stuhbs, 13.  
Swift, Dean, 25.  
  
TALITH, 9, 10.  
*Tallien, Mdme*, 40.  
Tambour, 197.  
Tape lace, 81, 110.

## THE LACE BOOK

"Tawdry lace," 174.  
Taxes on lace, 129.  
Thread, 88.  
"Transparents," 125.  
"Trolle Kant," 105.  
Trolly lace, 181, 191.  
*Tulle*, 37, 138, 139.  
Turner, Mrs., 16.

*Valenciennes*, 7, 35, 39, 99, 100, 109, 135, 139, 152, 153, 154, 193.  
*Valenciennes, Fausse*, 100, 193.  
*Valier, G. B.*, 70.  
*Vallière, Mdlle de la*, 124.  
*Valois*, 28, 29, 117.  
*Van der Passe, Mdme*, 13.  
Van Dyck, 21, 22, 75.  
Vatican, 8.  
*Vavassore, A.*, 69.  
Venice, 8, 15, 16, 30, 34, 60, 63, 64, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 74, 82, 83, 84, 88, 135.  
Venice Point, 24, 31.

Venetian Rose Point, 7, 61, 74, 77, 78, 196.  
*Verghetti*, 84.  
*Versailles*, 9.  
Victoria, Queen, 184.  
*Vinciolo, F.*, 30, 69.  
*Vosterman, W.*, 89.

**WALKER, CHARLES**, 196.  
Wardrobe Accounts, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 26, 93, 134, 135, 162, 170, 176.  
Warwickshire, 10.  
Wedmoll lace, 173.  
William and Mary, 24, 181.  
William III, 173.  
Wolsey, Cardinal, 169.

YOUGHAL, 195.  
Young, Arthur, 149, 153.  
Ypres, 100.

ZOPPINO, 68.











